

Cypriot leaders agree to meet in New York

NICOSIA (AP) — Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders have accepted an invitation by the U.N. secretary-general to resume talks in New York for the reunification of the island, the United Nations announced Wednesday.

Greek Cypriot President Glafos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash held separate meetings this week with a team of three top U.N. officials, who conveyed to them the invitation to the meeting, set for March 30.

Mr. Denktash, president of a breakaway state in Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus, initially rejected U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali's invitation.

But he changed his mind after further talks Tuesday with the

mediators — Oscar Camillon, the U.N. chief's special representative in Cyprus, Marrack Goulding, U.N. under-secretary-general for political affairs, and Gustave Feissel, a special envoy from New York.

Mr. Clerides, who was elected president earlier this month, had already accepted the invitation.

The U.N. statement said Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash will discuss at the one-day meeting under Dr. Ghali "the timing, modalities and preparation for the resumption of the substantive direct negotiations, in pursuance of his mission mandated by the Security Council."

The two Cypriot leaders were to meet face to face later Wednesday for the first time since Mr. Clerides' election during a farewell dinner for Mr. Camillon, who is leaving Cyprus after five years to take up his new post as Argentina's defence minister.

Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash are old acquaintances. They both helped draft the Cyprus constitution in 1968 after independence from Britain.

The last round of Cyprus talks was held in New York between Mr. Denktash and Mr. Clerides' predecessor, George Vassiliou.

The talks ended inconclusively when Mr. Denktash rejected guidelines proposed by Dr. Ghali for the reunification of the island in a bizonal federation.

Mr. Clerides has criticised cer-

tain elements in the blueprint, especially those that restrict the number of Greek Cypriot refugees who would be allowed to return to their homes in the north.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkey occupied the northern portion of the island after an Athens-backed coup by Greek Cypriot supporters of union with Greece.

Some 200,000 Greek Cypriots fled south or were evicted and an estimated 40,000 Turkish Cypriots moved north.

The U.N. blueprint calls for the withdrawal of the estimated 35,000 Turkish troops and 50,000 mainland settlers from the north. Mr. Denktash has rejected these conditions.



Members of the Islamic fundamentalist group Al Gamaa Al Islamiya shout slogans upon entering a military court outside Cairo Tuesday (AFP photo)

7 killed, 15 wounded in Aswan shootout

CAIRO (AP) — Seven alleged Muslim extremists died and at least 15 were wounded in a gunfight with police who surrounded a mosque in a southern tourist city to prevent a protest march, authorities said Wednesday.

The battle in Aswan, a tourist attraction and winter resort, was among the bloodiest in more than a decade between security forces and extremists seeking to supplant Egypt's largely secular government with an Islamic one.

Saeed Hilmy, Aswan's chief prosecutor, said by telephone that two plainclothes policemen also were wounded, one critically after a bullet grazed his heart.

The Tuesday night shootout occurred a few hours after a military court in Cairo began hearing the case against 49 Muslim extremists on terrorist charges including attacks on tourists.

Aswan, 980 kilometres south of Cairo, is southern Egypt's second tourist magnet after Luxor, the antiquities-rich city on the site of the ancient capital Thebes.

Aswan features the Philae temples, Elephantine Island and the 23-year-old Aswan High Dam, built with Soviet aid to harness the Nile River and generate electricity. It also is the jumping-off point for the famed Abu Simbel temples of Pharaoh Ramses II and his wife, Queen Nefertari.

President Hosni Mubarak often makes short, quick vacations to Aswan. His last visit ended two weeks before the gun-battle.

Mr. Hilmy said the shooting was at Al Rahman Mosque, a favourite extremist haunt in downtown Aswan. It began after evening prayers and iftar.

"Police received a tip that the extremists planned to gather at the mosque for discussions, then march on the streets in an anti-government demonstration," Mr. Hilmy said. "Acting on the information, police surrounded the mosque to prevent the demonstration. The exchange of fire ensued."

He said he did not know who shot first, but the firing continued "for several hours."

Exiles said to direct Egypt's Muslim militants

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian Muslim militants attacking foreigners and government forces are partly directed by leaders in exile in Afghanistan and Pakistan, according to former Interior Minister Hassan Abu Pasha.

Mr. Abu Pasha, who led a big clampdown on militants after the 1981 murder of President Anwar Sadat and was himself the target of an assassination attempt in 1987, said some militant leaders had been in Afghanistan and Pakistan since 1981.

"They're quite organised. I believe part of the militant leadership is abroad, giving instructions to the militants inside," he told Reuters in an interview. "There has always been contact between them. The focus on tourists is certainly planned by a higher leadership."

Egypt's main militant movement Al Gamaa Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), recently sent a statement from Peshawar, a Pakistani town on the border with Afghanistan. The statement warned that the campaign against tourism could be followed by attacks on foreign businesses.

Its spiritual leader and most obvious foreign connection is a blind preacher living in New Jersey, Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman. He was tried but acquitted on charges of sanctifying the Sadat assassination.

Two of his alleged followers have been charged in connection with the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York last

month. Sheikh Abdul Rahman has denied any link with the blast.

Mr. Abu Pasha said Sheikh Abdul Rahman was a member of the 12-man "majlis shoura" or consultative council which guides the Gamaa's general command.

Militant leaders based between Afghanistan and Pakistan included Ayman Zawahiri, one of the leaders of the Jihad (holy struggle) group responsible for the Sadat killing, he added.

The Gamaa and Jihad were separate, allied organisations during the late 1970s. After the Sadat killing, the Jihad was crushed by security forces and militant activity since then has been largely channelled through the Gamaa.

Mr. Abu Pasha said Mr. Zawahiri was sentenced to seven years in prison for weapons offences and having links with Sadat's killers but was freed in 1988. He went to Afghanistan but remained in contact with militants in Egypt.

Mohammad Shawki Islambuli, brother of hte man who led Sadat's assassins, is described by sympathisers as one of the brains behind the group and some Egyptian media reports have said he is also in Afghanistan.

Last December, a military court sentenced Mr. Islambuli to death in his absence.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are natural bases for Muslim groups. Militants from various Arab countries, including Egypt, fought alongside Afghan rebels.

Madrid admits holding talks with Hamas envoys

MADRID (AP) — The Spanish foreign ministry Tuesday admitted that it held talks with the Palestinian fundamentalist Hamas faction, a day after it denied having any contact with the group.

"Yes, we have had contact, not official, but low level," ministry spokesman Juan Lena said.

He said the ministry had denied Hamas claims Monday to have held talks with a Spanish foreign ministry envoy as the meeting was of a low-level nature and as such would not be reported by the ministry.

He said he did not believe there would be any further meetings.

Mr. Lena's comments came after the Hamas representative in Jordan, Mohammad Nazzal, expressed surprise at the Spanish ministry's denial.

He insisted that the group's representatives in Sudan, Munir Al Sayed, had held a two-hour meeting on Feb. 21 in the Sudanese capital Khartoum with Augustin Cassinello, a Spanish embassy consul in Cairo.

Speaking Tuesday, Mr. Lena

agreed the meeting had taken place as Mr. Nazzal described.

Mr. Nazzal said the two discussed the future of the Middle East peace talks following Israel's December expulsion of nearly 400 Palestinians to southern Lebanon.

The Middle East peace process began in Madrid, October 1991.

Hamas representatives have also met with British, Chinese, French, Italian and German officials as part of a diplomatic offensive to capitalise on the publicity it has received since the expulsions and to secure a bigger role in Middle East politics.

The United States last month admitted that had held talks with Hamas in Jordan. The U.S. Congress is seeking to add Hamas to America's terrorist list.

Hamas is a chief rival of the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) faction Fatah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Unlike Fatah, Hamas rejects the Middle East peace process and advocates the eradication of the Jewish state.

Sudan takes over Egyptian university in Khartoum

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has taken over an Egyptian-run university and sacked its vice-chancellor less than three months after annexing a number of Egyptian schools.

State television said Tuesday Education Minister Ibrahim Ahmad Omar had revoked a licence granted to Egypt in 1955 for the establishment of Cairo University, Khartoum Branch, and renamed the institution Nile University.

The television quoted Mr. Omar as saying the government was seeking to expand higher education in Sudan and bring home Sudanese students learning abroad.

He said the move was part of a review of Sudan's cultural relations with all countries.

Mr. Omar said Nile University would be financed and administered by his ministry. He announced the dismissal of the vice-chancellor and the deans of the science and law faculties. The university also offers courses in commerce and arts.

The new vice-chancellor appointed by Khartoum is Ibrahim Al Amin Nagar, formerly vice-chancellor of the First of September University in the western state of Darfur which was set up with Libyan aid.

Last December the Sudanese government annexed six Egyptian-run primary and secondary schools with a total student population of about 6,000, saying a change in the national school curriculum necessitated the takeover.

The Egyptians protested, saying the move was tantamount to a confiscation of the schools. Sudan has set up seven new

universities in the last three and a half years, raising annual student intake from 5,000 in 1989 to over 25,000 in the current academic year.

More than 6,000 Sudanese students studying abroad have been brought home.

Mr. Omar said he had sent a message to the Egyptian charge d'affaires in Sudan, thanking the Egyptian government, and lecturers who taught at the university.

Most of the students in the university are Sudanese but most of the teaching staff were Egyptians. It was not immediately clear what would happen to them.

Relations between the two states have been soured by Egyptian accusations that Sudan's Islamic rulers are encouraging Muslim militants in Egypt.

The two neighbours both claim the Halaib triangle, a remote, desert area bordering the Red Sea. Talks on the dispute in Khartoum last month made no apparent progress but a joint committee agreed to meet again in Cairo at an unspecified date.

In his televised statement, Mr. Omar said the university seizure "did not mean disruption of cultural exchanges with Egypt." He said Sudan "will pursue a new course of relations based on exchange of teachers, students and textbooks."

Egypt's government-owned Middle East News Agency said the university was attended by 25,000 students, mostly Sudanese. It said Egypt spent 55 million Egyptian pounds annually (\$16.5 million) to operate it. It estimated the value of university assets at 35 million pounds (\$10.5 million).

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Red Cross plans 9-month programme in Iraq

GENEVA (R) — The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said Tuesday it was planning a nine-month programme of food and medical aid for some 250,000 people across Iraq. The Geneva-based organisation, which links national Red Cross bodies across the world, said it was launching an appeal to its members for a total of 12 million Swiss francs (\$7.8 million) to fund the programme. IFRC spokeswoman Anne Naef said it wanted to supply basic drugs and medicine for chronic illnesses to the main general hospital in each of Iraq's 19 governorates, or provinces, and food to institutions catering for the needy. Iraq has been under full international economic sanctions, imposed by the United Nations Security Council, since Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990. Medical and food supplies for humanitarian purposes are excluded. Last month, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who had just returned from a tour of Iraq during which he visited several hospitals, called for an end to the sanctions which he said were killing more than 2,000 people a week. The federation, a separate body to the Swiss-run International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said the supplies would be delivered to Iraq from its regional office in Amman. IFRC officials in Baghdad would oversee forwarding of the items to the provinces, where they would be distributed by local Iraqi Red Crescent employees.

Blast rocks Kuwaiti embassy in Beirut

BEIRUT (AP) — An explosion shook the Kuwaiti embassy compound during the night and police said Wednesday it caused no casualties or major damage. The blast occurred in the garden of the fenced compound around midnight (2200 GMT) Tuesday, said a police spokesman. It was not immediately clear if it was caused by a bomb planted there or dynamite hurled over the wall. No one claimed responsibility for the attack. The embassy is located on the edge of Beirut, in the Bir Hassan neighbourhood. It is a few hundred metres away from Staitila, a Palestinian refugee camp. Thousands of Palestinians were kicked out of Kuwait after the 1991 Gulf war in retaliation for the Palestine Liberation Organisation's pro-Iraq sympathies during Iraq's occupation of the emirate. Some 50,000 Lebanese worked in the emirate before it was invaded in August 1990. Of those, 200 have been barred from returning to the emirate mainly because of alleged financial disputes with their Kuwaiti partners.

Turkey extends emergency rule

ANKARA (AP) — Parliament Wednesday extended emergency rule for four months in ten eastern and southeastern provinces where separatist Kurdish guerrillas are active. A diluted version of martial law, the emergency rule empowers state-appointed provincial governors to impose curfews, ban meetings and rallies, halt strikes and issue search warrants. The guerrillas of the illegal Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) have been fighting for self-rule in the region since 1984. Nearly 6,000 people have been killed since then. Kurds make up about one-fifth of Turkey's population of nearly 60 million. Turkish security forces have recently picked up operations against the rebels in anticipation of PKK-inspired disturbances during the upcoming Kurdish spring festival of Newroz on March 21. Dozens of people were killed in Newroz last year when troops fired on Kurdish demonstrators stoning them. The emergency rule will be in force in the provinces of Sinak, Batman, Diyarbakir, Dingenk, Didenk, Tunceli, Van, Hakkari, Mardin and Siirt.

Stranded South Africans appeal for work in Kuwait

BAHRAIN (AP) — Thirty men from South Africa were victims of an apparent scam that left them stranded in Bahrain, their jobs back home lost and most of them in debt.

As they wait for their foreign office to at least pay their return home fares, members of the group are knocking on doors in the hope that they may still land a job.

They were allegedly conned into signing on to work on reconstruction of a war-damaged refinery and offshore oil rig repairs in post-Gulf war Kuwait. Clauses in their contracts swore them to secrecy because the work supposedly involved the Kuwaiti De-

fence Ministry. "We've written to the Kuwaiti ambassador and some companies in Bahrain are also trying to help us find jobs, even return to them later," said 55-year-old Thomas Murray of Dunbee.

"I am actually devastated, lost 22,000 rands (about \$7,000). I have no job anymore, and I'll probably have to sell my house, which is mortgaged, to be able to settle my debt and live, along with my wife, until I find a job."

The men, stranded since Friday, are members of a group that originally numbered 42, lured by promises of a pay worth more than \$100,000 a year. Twelve have

made their way back home.

They said they were recruited by a company called Offshore Hosoya Japan Corporation, with offices in Tokyo, Bangkok and Bahrhan.

They paid \$2,000 required of them in South Africa, then were escorted each with \$5,000 in travellers checks to be turned over in Bangkok, where they were supposed to get their visas for Kuwait.

In Bangkok, they were told they did not need Kuwait entry visas. On a flight to Bahrain — from where they were told they would pick up helicopters straight for the oil fields of Kuwait — they

suddenly found their escort was not with them.

"We're strong men, no nervous breakdowns here, but it knocked the heart out of us," said Nico Pienaar, 37 of New Castle. "We South Africans are obviously very glib because of the years of isolation and sanctions."

"Everyone wanted the job so much, we overlooked so much," said Shane Crompton, 27, also of New Castle. "Now we have to go back home to face the music."

Most of them now have bank loans to contend with, some had sold homes and other possessions to be able to afford the money demanded.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Pif et Hercule
17:45 Les Mages
18:15 L'ecole des fans
18:30 News in French
19:15 Interrogation
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Ueda Back
21:10 Forever Green
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film: "Fire in the Dark"

PRAYER TIMES

06:31 Fajr
05:48 Sunrise
11:46 Dhuhr
15:08 Asr
17:44 Maghrib
19:01 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Switfish Tel. 816740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 62735
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

TERMINAL CHURCH

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Pif et Hercule
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Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 62735
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

USEFUL TELEPHONE

NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Yahiya Abdul Rahem 736072

Dr. Mahmoud Al Hindi 898787

Dr. Walid Al Maari 675475

Dr. Abdul Odeh Al Lala 750046

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fordows pharmacy 778336

Al Asena pharmacy 670255

Nasroukh pharmacy 625672

Al Salma pharmacy 626720

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmiciani pharmacy 637660

Najbi pharmacy 847632

IBRD: Dr. Mazen Abu Baker (—)

Al Ouds pharmacy (—)

Deserts 3/14

Jordan Valley 9/19

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 22, Humidity readings: Amman 50 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

It will be relatively cold and partly cloudy there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain, particularly in the northern parts of Jordan. Winds will be northerly to moderate, freshening at times. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas wavy.

Min./max. temp. 4/12

Aqaba 10/20

ZARQA:

Dr. Hisham Hayyat (—)

Khalaf pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue 199

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777

Blood Bank Amman 75121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 996390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 665800

Prior Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Repairs 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority

680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 636381

RU Flight Information 06-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussien Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816

Alfalah Maternity, J. Amn 643412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Maltas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmiciani 6641714

Shmiciani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 645845

Al-Mushtaq Hospital 6672279

The Islamic, Abdali 66612757

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6610496

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710103

Al-Badri, J. Ashrafieh 77511126

Army, Marfa 89161115

Queen Alia Hospital 60224950

Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:

Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarga National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)985732

Al Hikmah Modern Hospital (09)909090

IBRD:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

I



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received Her Majesty Queen Noor upon her arrival at Amman airport. Queen Noor has just concluded a several day visit to Germany, where she attended the inauguration of Berlin International Tourism Exchange. The Queen also attended a reception hosted by the German-Jordanian Friendship Society to mark the society's 40th anniversary. Also receiving the Queen were several of Their Royal Highnesses the Princes and Princesses.

Crown Prince hosts Iftar for retired NCOs

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday hosted an Iftar banquet in honour of retired non-commissioned officers at the Royal non-commissioned Officers Academy.

Prince Hassan conveyed to them His Majesty King Hussein's pride in them and underlined the importance of their role in serving the Kingdom.

The Crown Prince also stressed the need to activate the role of the Jordan Economic and Social

Organisation for Retired Servicemen (JESORS) by supporting it in establishing agricultural and industrial projects to curb unemployment among retired servicemen.

The banquet was attended by the assistant chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Human Resources, the director of JESORS, and several army officers.

Prince Hassan and the guests performed the Maghreb prayers together.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Chilean president

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday sent a cable to Chilean President Patricio Aylwin Ozcar congratulating him on the anniversary of his assumption of the presidency. King Hussein wished Mr. Ozcar good health and happiness and the Chilean people further progress and prosperity.

Sharif Zeid inaugurates new charity

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Wednesday inaugurated the Elbal Charitable Society in Jabal Al Hussein. The chairman of the society's administrative committee, Samih Makkawi, briefed Sharif Zeid on the objectives of the society and its future plans. Mr. Makkawi presented the prime minister with the society's shield in appreciation of his role in supporting charity and voluntary work in Jordan. The inauguration ceremony was attended by several ministers and deputies.

Shoman foundation, Wihdat Club open film week

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cinema Committee of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation and the Wihdat Club Wednesday began a film week at the club. The films include "Palestine — the Record of a People" by Palestinian director Qais Al Zubeidi, "The Big Question" by Iraqi director Mohammad Shukri, "A War Laboratory" and "Why?" by German director Monica Maurer.

NHF to open Jubilee School in August

AMMAN (Petra) — Preparations are underway at Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) to open the Jubilee School in August, according to School Headmaster Fathi Jarwan. Dr. Jarwan said NHF is currently working with Ministry of Education officials to brief them on its plans and future policies for admitting gifted and academically distinguished students. NHF will also brief the education officials on criteria for the selection of the first group of students. Dr. Jarwan said the Jubilee School will accept 600 students drawn from the various parts of Jordan, including 100 students from the Greater Amman area. The announcement about the establishment of the school came in November 1985, to mark Jordan's celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday.

JUST acting president meets with German envoy

RAMTHA (Petra) — Acting president of the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) Saad Hijazi met Wednesday with the German cultural attaché in Amman and discussed with him scopes of cooperation between Jordanian and German universities in scientific and cultural fields.

Irbid police chief urges curbing crime

IRBID (Petra) — Director of the Irbid Police Department Brigadier General Hashem Al Qaisi Wednesday met with members of Al Karmel Club and Azmi Al Mufri Refugee Camp citizens. Brig.-Gen. Qaisi talked at the meeting which was held at the club about the role of citizens in curbing the number of crimes. He stressed the importance of bolstering relations between policemen and citizens.

Traffic accidents up last week

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 11 people were killed and 144 were injured in 406 traffic accidents in Jordan last week, according to Public Security Department (PSD) sources. The sources said last week's accidents registered an increase of 11 over the week before. They added that 35 per cent of the accident victims were under 10 years of age, followed by the 21-30 age group, who accounted for 24.3 per cent of the total number of casualties. The sources blamed reckless driving, tailgating, loss of control of vehicles, speeding, wrong over-taking and non-adherence to the traffic regulations as the main reasons for the accidents.

Arab writers to hold symposium in Tripoli

AMMAN (Petra) — Secretary General of the Arab Writers Federation Fakhri Kassar has extended invitations to Arab writers associations to attend the symposium on the Arab novel, which will be held in Tripoli, Libya, on May 18. The symposium will discuss a number of issues including Arab novel realism, modern novel, challenges facing novel writing and the humanitarian dimension in the Arab novel, in addition to children's novels.

Islamists win 87% of university student council seats

By Sausan Ghosheh

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — An Islamist coalition swept through Monday's student council elections at the University of Jordan, securing 71 of 80 seats, according to final results announced Wednesday.

The strong showing of the Islamists appeared to have taken even the coalition activists by surprise. Prior to the election results, members of the Islamic Coalition had predicted that they would only win around 50 seats, which would have been a regression from the 64 seats they held in the last council.

They had attributed this expected decrease to the growth of a more organised Jordanian nationalist bloc. The Nationalist Alliance projected to win 40 seats, was only able to capture three.

The leftists, who only participated in the elections by supporting independents, said that three of their "close friends" managed to reach the council.

The other three seats in the council were filled by students who ran as independents. But sources say that all those who ran as independents were supported by one of the two main coalitions, the Islamists or the nationalists. Support for independents was also provided by leftists and the university administration, they maintain.

Dean of Student Affairs at the University of Jordan Mohammad Khreisat said 60.83 per cent of the students voted, which is an average of 0.2 per cent more than the previous year. He explained that although the percentage of those who voted decreased in all the colleges, an increase in voting

by the Pharmaceutical College resulted in the increase of the total percentage.

Dr. Khreisat declined to give official results on the percentage each coalition acquired, refusing to acknowledge that the students ran in coalitions.

University students have complained to the Jordan Times that the atmosphere at the University of Jordan has become tense because relations between Jordanian and students of Palestinian origin and between Jordanians from different regions have become strained. This, they attributed as the main reason for the Islamists' victory.

Ibrahim Hatabeh, a member of the Jordanian Democratic Youth League (RASHAD) and a leftist student at the University of Jordan, said the leftists on campus approached the Islamist Coalition

to form an alliance against the "tribalism" of the Nationalist Alliance.

The Islamists, according to Mr. Hatabeh, refused, explaining that the leftists were late in their request.

Some Islamist candidates, however, said that there were agreements between their coalition and the leftists in some colleges.

Most students interviewed by the Jordan Times said they believed regional tensions had caused problems in the Nationalist Alliance and led to its division, and thus further strengthening the Islamists.

The said it was obvious that some members of the Nationalist Alliance voted for students from their respective cities who were also members of the Islamist Coalition.

The programmes of the different coalitions were quite similar; purely academic, with minimum reference to their political ideologies. But observers say that students' choices were based on political preferences.

In addition some observers are analysing the results of the student council elections to see if they can arrive at indicators for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

A total of 12,839 of 21,169 students voted in the university elections; most of them are also eligible to vote in the parliamentary elections this year.

In addition, 15 females, most of them Islamists secured seats on the council.

Observers say this may be an indication that the Islamists might nominate women to run for the 12th parliament.

Campaign tricks were also apparent in the student council elections, sources say. At least two reminder slips were made for each coalition. For example, one included the names of candidates who are members of the Islamic coalition; the other listed the Islamic coalition candidates and the independent candidates they claimed they supported. But copies of these reminder slips which were made available to the Jordan Times showed that the one that the Islamic Coalition distributed to the independent candidates' supporters bore his/her name, but the copy given out to their own supporters did not.

The barter for votes technique may have thus been one-sided, with the independents giving their votes to Islamist candidates but receiving no Islamist votes in return.

Princess Basma inspects charity drive near Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday toured several areas surrounding Amman following up on the charity campaign being implemented in various parts of the Kingdom to raise funds for poor families.

In Sahab, the first stop on the Princess tour, she laid the foundation stone of the social service centre established by Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) to provide basic social needs for citizens in Sahab and neighbouring areas.

Sahab's centre brings to 40 the number of such centres set up by QAF.

Princess Basma also supervised the distribution of in-kind assistance to some 700 needy families, including 500 families in Sahab itself. The Princess then visited Souf camp where she inspected a

kindergarten run by the Arab Fund for Child Welfare, and the Souf Community Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled, which is run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Princess Basma met with people from Souf camp and listened to their demands, in terms of social services for children, women and the disabled. She also supervised the distribution of in-kind assistance to 300 families.

The last stop on her tour was Zarqa, where she met with the boyscouts, and girl guides who took part in the fund-raising activities, organised under the charity campaign.

Princess Basma thanked the scouts and girl guides for their contribution to the campaign.

The meeting was attended by the Zarqa governor.

Bakers, government sign compromise

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government and bakery owners in Jordan have reached a compromise agreement to settle their dispute over recent price hikes of bread and flour and avert a threatened strike by the bakers.

The compromise involves a total commitment to the findings and recommendations of a study to be conducted by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) on the baking industry in Jordan, said Abed Iah Al Hamawi, president of the Association of Bakery Owners in Jordan.

The Ministry of Supply and representatives of the association have signed the agreement, which now averts a protest action planned for March 13 by the bakers. Mr. Hamawi told the Jordan Times.

The proposed RSS study, which will be launched im-

mediately after the holy month of Ramadan, "will focus on every aspect of the baking industry in Jordan and hopefully come up with an unbiased and realistic assessment on the actual costs that the bakers pay to produce bread," Mr. Hamawi said.

According to Mr. Hamawi, the government had been rejecting bakers' complaints that they were denied a "fair margin of profits" by refusing to accept "many elements of expenses" as legitimate costs of production.

"Our costs have gone up in every aspect, be it power, water, sugar and other ingredients, wages, administrative expenses and machinery maintenance," he said.

"We raised the subject with the government on many occasions in the past years, but our arguments were totally rejected," he said. "We are only exercising our right to ensure that we get a fair

margin of profit as any other industry in Jordan," said Mr. Hamawi.

The dispute flared after the government increased the prices of subsidised bread and flour early this year and the bakers complained that the increases were not proportionate. The bakers argued that while they had to pay 30 per cent more for flour, the price for bread was raised by 12 per cent, and thus the baking industry was absorbing the major part of the hike.

Several compromise formulas were discussed, but no solution could be found to address the grievances of the bakers. The Association of Bakers in Jordan held a general assembly meeting on Feb. 12 and served notice on the government that they would start a protest action after 28 days if no equitable solution was found to address their problem. The compromise agreement,

which included a revocation of the bakers' decision to launch a protest action, was thrashed out by a mediation committee.

No government comment was available on the agreement, but officials confirmed that the accord was reached.

According to Mr. Hamawi, one of the key stipulations in the agreement is that both sides would be "firmly committed to abiding by the findings of the study and implementing the recommendations that the RSS would offer."

The association, which has 1,247 bakeries as its members, ensured such a commitment from all bakers by including representatives from all the eight governorates as signatories to the accord, he said.

"We can safely say that the problem is on its way to a solution which will be fair and just to all sides," Mr. Hamawi said.

Women's panel urges creation of national women's rights society

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in a panel discussion organised by the Amnesty International's (AI) Women's Committee, Tuesday recommended the creation of a national "society" to defend women's rights.

At a one-day discussion held at the Royal Cultural Centres (RCC) to mark International Women's Day, participants stressed the need to establish such a society, comprising both men and women.

They also called for forming a national committee to include members of AI Jordan and representatives of the Jordan chapter of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR), as well as representatives of women's organisations and political and social activists in the country.

The committee's role, as envisaged by participants, is to prepare

a draft resolution and plan of action for the Vienna convention, to be held later this year.

Addressing Tuesday's celebrations were Asma Khader, Labib Kamhawi and Zulaikha Abu Reeshah. Their discussions dwelt on women's rights, the special status of women in the Arab World, the legislation in force at the local and regional Arab levels, and the relevance of such relations to international charters and conventions on women's rights.

Most participants agreed that women's rights are an inseparable part of human rights and that every possible effort should be made to correct the injustices inflicted upon women.

On social recognition of women's rights, participants spoke of two types of recognition:

theoretical and practical recognition, saying that there was a large gap between the theoretical and practical recognition.

Participants also debated the rights of women to a nationality and a passport, access to family planning, as well as other subjects.

They stressed the need to form pressure groups to ensure the enactment of laws giving equal rights and treatment to men and women.

AI accords special importance to human rights issues and the defence of women. In 1991, it launched a campaign to discuss the status of women. In 1992, AI also mounted another campaign focusing on women victims of rape, sexual exploitation, severe punishment and other forms of maltreatment.

Dentists call for national panel to study dental health status

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in a two-day symposium on dental health education Wednesday concluded their meetings with a call for undertaking studies aimed at assessing dental health problems, measuring the percentage of fluoride in the water supply and comparing it with international standards approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Participants adopted a number of recommendations designed to improve dental health education and promote awareness of dental care and preventive measures.

They recommended the formation of a national committee to include representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Jordanian Dentists Association, faculties of Dentistry at the University of Jordan and the Jordan University of Science and Technology, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and WHO.

The committee will be entrusted with drafting a statistical plan of action and assessing the dental health problem.

They also called for involving large numbers of students in preventive care activities, and stressed the need for providing dental supervision at schools.

Ministries, credit group to start \$19.7m agricultural project

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Planning Secretary General Safwan Touqan Wednesday said the ministry, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) will implement a \$19.7 million project, aimed at diversifying sources of income for poor families working in agriculture.

Dr. Touqan said the project's costs will be shared by the Arab Fund for Agricultural Development (AFAD) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, (Petra), Dr. Touqan said AFAD will provide \$8 million and IFAD will provide \$10 million.

The project will cover rural areas in the governorates of Amman, Irbid, Balqa, Mafrq, Karak, Tafleh, and Maan.

The project involves importing goats and developing animal wealth, planting trees, producing fodder, developing food processing, and encouraging dairy production.

CONDOLENCES

The editor and staff of the Jordan Times deeply mourn the passing of

Mr. Izzat Mohammad Al Aloul

uncle of their friend and colleague Miss Masa Aloul.
May his soul rest in peace.

**AMBASCIATA D'ITALIA
DIPARTIMENTO CULTURALE**
Indagine statistica a fine conoscitiva
degli Italofofoni residenti nel Regno Hascemita
di Giordania

Al fine di una programmazione culturale del Dipartimento si invitano tutti i professionisti laureati in Italia, persone che hanno studiato, frequentato corsi e/o usufruito di borse di studio, lavorato, viaggiato frequentemente in Italia, appassionati della cultura italiana, ecc., a far pervenire cortesemente, e al più presto possibile, i seguenti dati: Nome, indirizzo, telefono, anno di nascita, anno di laurea, luogo degli studi, attività svolta in Giordania, indirizzo e telefono sede lavoro. Numero ed età dei figli, loro scuola in Giordania, indicazione (con nome e provenienza) del coniuge. Tutte le notizie che si riconoscono utili.

(Si prega scrivere a macchina o in stampatello ed indirizzare a questa Ambasciata, P.O. Box 9800, all'attenzione del prof. E. Minardo).

ANOTHER INNOVATION FROM AIR FRANCE

THE CREATION OF THE "HUB" WITH THE OPENING OF TERMINAL 2C AT PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT ON THE 28th OF MARCH.

AIR FRANCE flights to Paris from Amman will operate at CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT new terminal 2C, as from its opening day on 28 March '93, where connections to USA (except Concorde), MEXICO, ASIA and the PACIFIC will also operate. Terminal 2C has been especially designed to accommodate Air France Long-haul flights. It's 20 per cent larger than the other three terminals already in operation. Relaxation areas (including those for children) have been provided and waiting lounges are twice as spacious. A new Automated Baggage Sorting System will considerably reduce handling time as well as the risk of routing errors. Terminal 2C has been designed with a view to facilitating connections between CDG terminals 2A, 2B, 2D where other Air France group flights and those of its partners operate.

With the opening of terminal 2C, Charles De Gaulle Airport, already Air France's Gateway, will become its "HUB." This is a simple concept consisting of air routes organized in a star-shaped network around a large airport serving as the "HUB."

This is another step forward for the comfort and pleasure of Air France's passenger.

AIR FRANCE
ASK THE WORLD OF US

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of handicrafts by Jordanian artist Dana Ahmad Khreis at the Royal Cultural

Centre.

★ Exhibition entitled "The Present Islamic World in Photos and News" at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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By Safwan Bataineh

The case for privatisation in Jordan

THE COMMON belief that private ownership and investment lead to better management and more marketable products has become an axiom of modern economic thinking as mounting evidence of the poor quality of public sector investment and output became irrefutable proof. The collapse of centrally controlled economies and the failure of the Swedish model of a mixed economy finally ended the debate in favour of market-based economic policies.

Jordan, which proclaimed itself a free economy back when socialism was still in vogue, finds itself behind most nations in liberalising the economy and in adopting a market-based approach to economic growth. A disproportionately large and powerful public sector, determined to maintain access to corporate appointments, has proved itself a formidable adversary to attempts at privatisation.

Yet the case for privatisation in Jordan is as strong as anywhere else. The following sets of comparative statistics should provide ample ammunition to liberal policy makers if and when they decide to wage another round of battle.

The first comparison (Table 1) is made between government controlled companies (over 40 per cent of the shares are held by the public sector) and shareholding companies with no significant government holdings (below 15 per cent of shares).

The comparison, which looks at profitability over a 10 year period and at employment generation, covers all non-financial shareholding companies that were in operation in or before 1984 and are still in business today. Because of the lack of published financial information, companies not listed on the Amman Stock Exchange were not included in the samples. The sole exception is Royal Jordanian whose financial reports are readily available.

The second comparison (Table 2) looks at sales growth, investment, labour productivity as well as profitability and employment generation. It measures the performance of manufacturing shareholding companies with significant government ownership (more than 15 per cent) in relationship to other manufacturers over two periods — from 1981 to 1990 and from 1986 to 1990. Here, the comparison covers all manufacturing shareholding companies (excluding mining) that were in operation at least two years before the beginning of the period and are still in business today.

The results are distressing, especially in view of the large size of government controlled assets.

In 1990, government controlled shareholding companies accounted for 85 per cent of the assets of all service companies listed on the stock exchange and 60 per cent of the assets of listed manufacturers. When the assets of Royal Jordanian are added, the total assets of all government-owned firms in (Table 1) amount to three times the assets of all other nonfinancial shareholding companies in the Kingdom.

It is truly tragic that the government could not earn a single plaster from the employment of all these assets throughout the five year period from 1984 to 1988 before the fall of the Jordanian dinar nagged the

value of mining exports and produced windfall profits in JD terms). During the same period, private sector firms earned 21 per cent on the assets they employed.

The comparisons reveal an amazing degree of incompetency on the part of government-owned companies. Despite the fact that many of them are pure monopolies and that some of them can set artificially high prices, and despite their ability to access cheap credit and obtain government guarantees on loans, these companies lagged behind their private sector counterparts in every performance criterion the writer could think of, and by a wide margin.

Private sector companies grew faster, invested more, earned higher returns, achieved larger productivity gains, and generated more employment for each dinar worth of investment.

The 10 year period chosen for the study brought in as much data as possible without risking a severe reduction in the size of the samples. In addition, each comparison included a five year period in order to measure the effect of the recession on performance. This was done in the second comparison mostly to test managerial ability, which accounts for much during times of hardship.

Unexpectedly, the performance of private sector manufacturing companies actually improved during the recession while that of government-owned firms worsened substantially.

The data supports the textbook rationale for privatisation, which we understand to include the following arguments:

1) Private owners are motivated primarily by the desire to maximise the returns on their investments. To achieve this objective, private owners will install the most capable management available.

In a competitive environment, management will seek to maximise profits by increasing productivity and improving the marketability (i.e. the quality or price competitiveness) of goods and services. The aggregate effort of profit-minded producers, operating under conditions of free competition, will lead to higher and more sustainable growth rates, higher incomes, and more opportunities for permanent employment.

2) Privatisation leads to a more efficient allocation of resources in the economy. Unlike government, private investors will not pour money into bad investments just to prevent a business from going under. Instead, their money will chase after business opportunities with the brightest prospects.

At the same time, private investors are less likely to fail because they are more sensitive to changes in consumer demands and tastes and more cost-conscious. The net result is higher returns on aggregate investment and more permanent increases in output.

3) Public sector investments, on the other hand, will generate initial increases in both output and employment. But because of the poor quality of such investments, the high failure rate, and the tendency to subsidise failure, state enterprises eventually become a drain on public resources, diverting money away from more productive uses.

Privatisation can put an end to this

	Government owned companies	Private sector companies
No. of companies	13	23
Total average assets 1981-1990	990,245,000 JD	107,066,000 JD
Average annual pre-tax return on assets 1981-1990	2.0%	6.8%
Total profits (loss) 1984-1988	(54,460,000) JD	22,540,000 JD
Total profits (loss) As % of total average assets	(5.5%)	21.1%
No. of employees per one million JD of investment	10.2	28.0

	Manufacturing companies with significant govt. ownership	Manufacturing companies with no significant govt. ownership
Sales growth 1981-1990	94.0%	188.0%
Sales growth 1986-1990	35.0%	167.0%
Fixed assets growth 1981-1990	39.0%	87.0%
Fixed assets growth 1986-1990	(22.0%)	1.0%
Average annual pre-tax return on assets 1981-1990	3.6%	7.1%
Average annual pre-tax return on assets 1986-1990	3.0%	9.2%
Output per labour growth 1981-1990	35.0%	83.0%
No. of employees per one million JD of investment	16.0	29.7

drawn. It is important to recognise that the government tendency to subsidise failure (or mask true performance with subsidies) exists regardless of ownership. Enterprises initiated, controlled (through legal and administrative links), or financed by the state can also become recipients to costly subsidies.

A privatisation programme, therefore, must address all aspects of the state involvement with commercial entities. Even the carrying out of feasibility studies by state agencies can entail a moral obligation on the part of government to rescue an operation that came into existence as a result of an overly optimistic feasibility study.

4) Private investors are understandably reluctant to face competition from a state-owned enterprise. They

are also reluctant to enter a sector where government is likely to provide financial and other incentives or subsidies on a selective basis.

A privatisation programme that brings an end to government interference in a given sector and succeeds in convincing investors that conditions of free competition will prevail would encourage a level of private investment that is commensurate with the expected returns for the sector.

Thus, in order to encourage the growth of private investment and to enhance both productivity and the quality of output, Jordan should adopt a privatisation programme that aims for the following objectives simultaneously:

1) To divest the public sector of all commercial activities (excluding mining and utilities). This should cover both direct ownership and legal and

administrative links.

2) To end direct public sector investment in commercial enterprises and replace direct lending by the state with financing privately-held lending institutions.

3) To reduce and codify regulations, making them more transparent and specific and less subject to interpretation, selectivity, and change. Streamlining regulations must be accompanied by the institutionalisation of effective supervision over the banking system, shareholding companies, the accounting and auditing profession, and the Amman Financial Market.

4) To remove all obstacles to free competition, including the practice of giving support and incentives to certain enterprises and investors to the exclusion of others (regardless of the apparent merits of such actions). It must be recognised that such practice will actually deter private investment in the sector where selective incentives are provided. The tourism industry in Amman is a good example of how misguided promotional schemes eventually retard aggregate investment.

A framework for privatisation

The most serious obstacle facing a privatisation programme in a country with a large public sector is the natural resistance of the civil service — people who stand to lose power, prestige, appointments on company boards, etc.

To circumvent such resistance, the programme must be engineered and managed by a group of professionals who suffer no conflict of interests. More importantly, this group must be able to clear decisions from the highest authority through direct channels. This group, which includes financial analysts and investment bankers, would map out specific strategies and time plans for the various privatisation targets and present the proposals directly to the Prime Minister for approval and clearance.

The ideal headquarters for such a group would be the offices of the Jordan Investment Corporation, a department which will assume a central role in the implementation of any privatisation programme. Two other groups of economists and investment bankers would be set up to research impediments to competition and to solicit potential investors.

An intelligent and articulate media drive should precede and accompany the programme in order to ensure public goodwill and acceptability and to generate investors' interest. The programme should be packaged not as mere privatisation measures but as comprehensive programme to liberalise the economy and support private initiative.

A comprehensive strategy should identify priorities, work out a timetable for implementation, and devise a thorough and

meticulous plan for each deal. Privatisation should be carried out on sectoral basis and not on company basis.

For example, assuming that priority is given to the tourism sector, the privatisation effort would concentrate on this sector exclusively and would not shift emphasis until all state ownership in the sector are liquidated and all impediments to free competition and private investment are removed.

This approach is essential to achieving the multiple objectives of the programme. Obviously, the priority should be given to the sectors that have the most pressing needs for competition and private capital. My own choice would be the manufacturing sector, followed by business services.

As for the Social Security Corporation (SSC), the state agency which manages the only pension scheme in the country, the issue is not whether it should invest in equity or not. Clearly, it should invest more of its money, if not in equity rather than in debt obligations or bank deposits.

What is required here is the removal of the SSC's investment from the category of government ownership either by privatising the SSC itself or by farming out the management of its investments to outside specialists. It is high time, anyway, that investment banks owned up to their name and offered a real menu of investment services, including fund management.

An important related issue is the impediments to primary market activities which have constrained new share issuances since 1983. Arbitrary price setting by the Ministry of Trade and Industry has discouraged both the supply and demand for new share issues.

Furthermore, the poor supervision over the contents of the share prospectus and the lack of legal deterrence against false or incomplete financial disclosure have scared investors away from primary issues, rendering the Amman Financial Market unable to fulfill its central purpose — the facilitation and expansion of equity financing.

Short-sighted political considerations and vested interests must not be allowed to obstruct or hijack the prospects of sustainable growth any longer. Nor should we allow privatisation to continue to elude us by the unrealistic talk of privatising huge public utilities and mammoth failures.

Such talk has served only as a smoke screen for inaction. Smaller and more urgent targets must be defined and prepared for immediate actualisation. Otherwise, the battle of privatisation may be lost even before the first shot is fired.

Safwan Bataineh is a Jordanian economist who regularly writes for the Jordan Times

Intimidation is undemocratic

THE VOTE of the Lower House of Parliament Wednesday against a bill to segregate sexes at schools was the outcome of a classic exercise of the democratic process: Some deputies proposed the bill, the House discussed it; the majority voted against it and the proposal was killed.

But what happened outside the domed building of the House after the vote was a frightening act of intolerance, demagoguery and failure to accept the rules of democracy.

Some deputies from the Muslim Brotherhood bloc came awfully close to physically attacking Deputy Faris Nabulsi at the end of the session for no other reason but that he disagreed with their views. These Brotherhood deputies insulted Mr. Nabulsi with profanities, displaying flagrant disrespect for a fellow parliamentarian, the Jordanian Parliament and the people Mr. Nabulsi represents.

On its own merits such behaviour is alarming. But it rings extra loud because of the fearful implications that it has for the future of this country should the people who perpetrated it come to power.

Verbal assaults of this nature should be condemned by all Jordanians who are determined to live in a society that accommodates the views of all and the ruling of the majority.

The simple and clear message of this behaviour is that all the talk about tolerance and pluralism by some parties is but empty rhetoric used as a tactic to penetrate the echelons of power. If yesterday's outbursts are an example of what some elected officials might do if they actually hold the reins in the future, one can only shiver at the gloomy prospects for our young democracy.

The Jordanian people should study this incident carefully and reassess their perception of all political orientations in its light. And the deputies who insulted their colleague should be reminded that the people will not sit idle when they try to intimidate others into adopting their views.

Mr. Nabulsi was reflecting the opinions of thousands of Jordanians opposed to the ban on co-education. Those people have as much right to express themselves as do the members of the Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters.

Deputies who did not subscribe to the Brotherhood views accepted the will of the majority at the House in many cases before. The Brotherhood deputies should learn to do that too.

The deputies who lashed insults at Mr. Nabulsi Wednesday owe him, his constituency and all Jordanians an apology. And the Jordanian people owe it to themselves, their country and the future of their democracy to speak out strongly against intolerance and intimidation.

What happened Wednesday is an incident that they should vividly remember this summer when they go to the polls to elect their new representatives.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AS THE United States and Russia, the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace talks, are expected to issue invitations to the parties to the Arab-Israeli talks, no signs of progress in implementing U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 on returning the Palestinian expellees to the... (ing, Al Ra'i Arabic daily said in an editorial Wednesday. The newspaper quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as saying that his country's stand on the expellees remains unchanged. This position, the newspaper said, is represented in substituting resolution 799 with the Israeli-Arabian deal which only calls for returning 101 of the more than 400 expelled Palestinians. This indicates that Israel is keen to obstruct the peace negotiations and prevent their resumption as scheduled because it chose to make of the expellees issue an obstacle in the way of resuming the talks, Al Ra'i said. It added that if Washington and Moscow extend invitations to the concerned parties to attend the talks this does not exempt them from the responsibility of resolving the issue of the deportees. Even the two capitals' reluctance to remove this impediment from the path of peace does not mean that the ball is in the Palestinians' court, every one knows that this is an Israeli obstacle, and that the ball is in Israel's court now, said the newspaper. It concluded by saying that time was ripe now to swiftly resolve the problem of the expellees in a manner that conforms to international legitimacy and allows the ninth round of Middle East peace talks to resume as scheduled.

AL DUSTOUR Arabic daily commented in an editorial on Tuesday's Palestinian-British meeting in London, describing it as being important regardless of its outcome. The newspaper said it was the first such meeting at such a high ministerial level between the government of British Prime Minister John Major and a Palestinian delegation comprising representatives of Palestinians from the occupied territories as well as those of the diaspora. In addition, Al Dustour added, the meeting signifies the easing of restrictions on high-level diplomatic contacts with the Palestinians. Furthermore, the meeting might be the beginning of a series of similar diplomatic contacts between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and influential Western states, including the U.S. administration, the newspaper continued. Al Dustour commended the role of the British government in arranging for the meeting, adding that this measure shows increasing indications of Europe's desire to play a more active role in the peace talks.

The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

Wife-beating blacks, drunken Indians, and one billion bombers...?

THANKS to the marvels of satellites, many people around the world could watch U.S. television coverage of the events surrounding last week's arrest of Mohammad Saleh, who was detained and is being charged with playing a role in the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York City. What we saw was negative, incomplete, whimsical, often racist, very stereotypical, and highly unprofessional U.S. television coverage during the first few days after Saleh's arrest.

The troubling thing about the coverage was its excessive visual and verbal focus on the militarism and violence of a brand of politicised Islamic fundamentalism that defines a very small minority of Arabs. I have no problem with straight news coverage of the suspect, the rented van, mentioning the mosque where Saleh worshipped, and even reviewing instances of Islamic violence in Egypt, the U.S.A. or other countries — if this is balanced by important parallel issues such as the reasons for his religious motivation, the social, political and economic contexts that promote politicised Islam in the Arab World, or how the Islamic religion responds to some people's need for a fresh form of political expression and social protection. But this is not what American television gave us last week.

For several days after the arrest, when viewer interest was at its height, U.S. television ran repeated stories that associated Islam, Arabism, violence and terrorism as a single, unified phenomenon. The several reports that I saw, and that continue to appear this week, focused on the preachings of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman in New Jersey, his links to Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt, and their alleged collective association with the assassinations of Anwar Sadat and Meir Kahane and the more recent violence against foreign tourists and domestic personalities in Egypt. These may be accurate facts; but used in isolation of the broader reality of our world they become selective, inaccurate, incomplete, and demeaning components of a brand of media racism that demeans the intelligence of Americans as much as it savages the dignity and humanity of Arabs and Muslims.

Regardless of whether these people were guilty or innocent, what the American TV viewer got last week was a barrage of reports associating violence, killing, assassination and terrorism with Islam and Arabism; almost all the images chosen to be shown to viewers alongside these verbal themes were carefully chosen images of violence, extremism, fanaticism, and death. The combination was deadly to any thought of accurate and rational communication that the media may have desired to play or ought to have played.

The problem with such news reporting is that by taking only one aspect of Arab/Islamic culture — militaristic and violent terrorism — it builds an image in the viewer's mind of this being the defining characteristic of Arab/Islamic culture in general. The viewer is rarely told that these people represent a very small fringe of Arabs/Muslims; and there is virtually no attempt to explain why Islamic fundamentalism has such a wide following in this region. Other aspects that define the world of Arabism and Islam — charity, hospitality, education, piety, tolerance, ethnic and religious pluralism — are ignored.

I am sure this does not reflect a conscious effort to defame and

stereotype Arabs by the American media. It is, rather, an unconscious consequence of four basic problems we live with today.

1. The nature of U.S. television news is a big problem. The intensely competitive news business demands that reporters package their stories as a combination of fact and drama that can catch the viewer's attention and keep the viewer tuned to that station, where the commercial imperative to attract viewers and dog food advertisers reigns supreme over all other considerations. Given the short time of most reports (1-2 minutes) and the need to dramatise and entertain, most reporters end up having to rely on images, words and symbols that tell an entertaining and exciting story, thereby reducing complex realities into stereotypes and clichés. In this case, the result has been a series of rapid-fire images of Arab Muslims shown alternately praying and engaged in violent acts.

"The litmus test of fairness and accuracy (in the U.S. media's coverage of the Mohammad Saleh case) is always a simple one. Would the U.S. media have used the same religious and racial imagery had the suspect been Jewish or black? Probably not, certainly not... The double standards are clear here."

2. A second problem is the powerful legacy of distorted Western, especially American, perceptions of Islam and Arabism. The Orient and the Occident have engaged in confrontations, and mutual misperceptions and fears for several thousand years, so that mutual distortions of the other's culture are the norm. It is peculiar that Arabs and Americans tend to share the same strange stereotypes of each other, in both cases focusing on the images of parallel violence and opulence. The average Arab's image of the United States is probably that of a land of wealth and opportunity, or a decadent and violent urban landscape where people hesitate to walk out of their homes for fear of being robbed or raped. Similarly, the two predominant views of Arab/Islamic culture in the United States are probably related to oil wealth and terrorism. Such gross inaccuracies on the part of both parties reflect a tradition of stereotyping that goes back many centuries.

3. The immediate new element that may be fuelling anti-Arab and anti-Islamic sentiment in the United States is the apparent need for Americans to define a new external enemy to replace communism. Arabs and Muslims appear to be a prime candidate for this (Japan and China were two other leading contenders, but seem to have dropped out of the race for the world's new bad guy). The Arab/Islamic world provides a very plausible new enemy for the United States and those of its colleagues in the

West who share its tendency towards racist hysteria in foreign policy, for several reasons: there is already a good foundation of negative Western perceptions of Arabs/Muslims based on bad experiences of hijackings, terrorism, hostage-taking and other recent events; some in the U.S. may have an interest in portraying this region as violent and threatening, in order to provide credible cover for direct U.S. protection and exploitation of Arab oil supplies and income; and, the tradition of confrontation and rage over U.S. policy towards the Palestine issue and other matters provides fertile ground for those who seek to promote greater tension between Arabs and Americans.

4. The last point is that in the last half a century a small minority of people in the United States have actively promoted a negative image of Arabs and Muslims, due to their pro-Israeli convictions or for the purpose of electoral advantage in the United States. This anti-Arab and anti-Muslim attitude is not sufficiently countered by intelligent Arab activism or diplomacy, leaving a residue of predominantly negative images of Arabs and Muslims into which incidents such as the arrest of Mohammad Saleh fit very nicely.

The litmus test of fairness and accuracy in this case is always a simple one. Would the U.S. media have used the same religious and racial imagery had the suspect been Jewish or Black? Probably not. Certainly not. The double standards are clear here. In other cases of violence, whether in the U.S.A. or around the world, the media usually makes a credible attempt to look beyond the surface violence in order to understand its root causes. This was not the case in the coverage of the arrest of Mohammad Saleh. In instances of violence by Arabs/Muslims, however, this television reports that I saw.

Would U.S. television repeatedly highlight the high rate of alcoholism and domestic violence among blacks and native Americans, say, without adequately dealing with their underlying causes? Certainly not. Why, then, does the U.S. media allow without addressing its underlying causes and putting it in its proper, full context? Why is such violence not properly defined Arabs?

The American commercial media, on the whole, has once again succumbed to its old penchant for racist, entertaining drama, at the expense of honest, cross-cultural communication. We had, transfer of knowledge between Americans and Arabs, between the Occident and Orient, and between the realms of Islam and Christianity. Let us hope that thoughtful people in the U.S.A. and in the Arab World alike will recognise their shortcomings in making an attempt to use the media for more constructive partners, because they share so many values and aspirations.

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Weekender

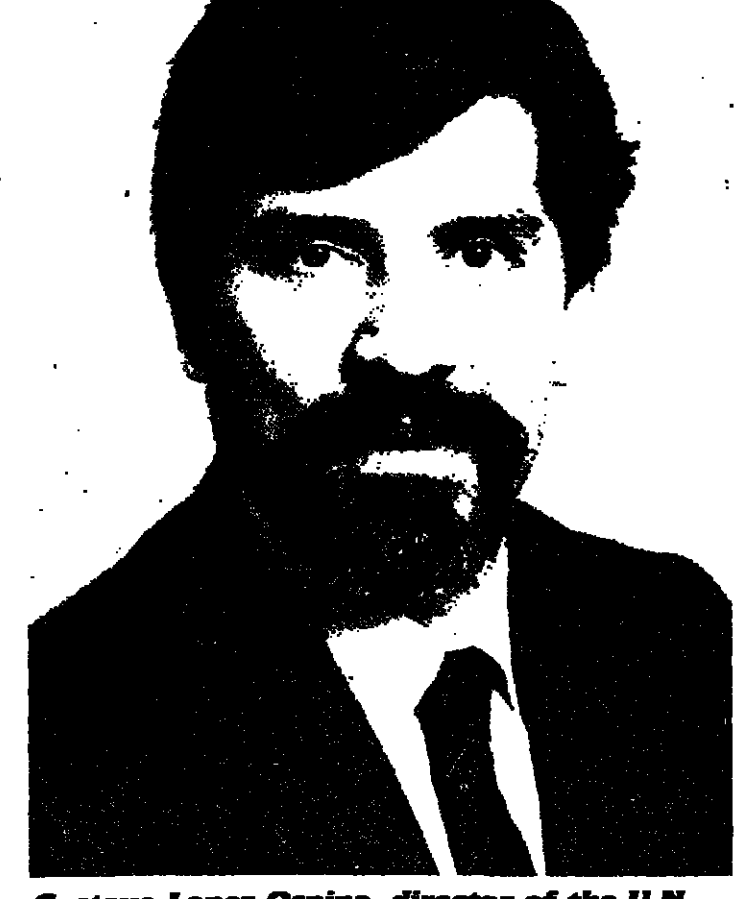
North, South universities link up

By Farida Burtis
NEW YORK — "Our first REDALK satellite facility linking institutions of higher education will start operating from Mexico next year," said Gustavo Lopez Ospina, director of the U.N. Liaison Office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). "This is an important concept for UNESCO because it involves networking universities in the developing world with institutions in the U.S., Canada and other developed countries." As a result, students in developing countries will be able to access information from universities in developed countries.

REDALK stands for Educational Network for Latin America and the Caribbean. Mr. Lopez, a Colombian, said \$25 million is being provided for the project by the European Community. After assessing its success in the Americas, UNESCO expects to duplicate REDALK

to involve educational institutions in Asia and Africa. The project is part of UNESCO's new priority goal to strengthen inter-university cooperation, with emphasis on higher education in the developing countries. Another programme called UNITWIN (for "twinning of universities") has evolved from this goal. It is designed to facilitate "networking and other linking arrangements on the basis of North-South, South-South, and East-West cooperation," Mr. Lopez said. As a result of the UNITWIN project, for example, universities in the occupied Arab territories will benefit from increased cooperation with European universities. Mr. Lopez added. The project involves 18 universities. "Cooperation will focus on subjects such as the environment, agriculture, applied sciences, management and business administration, modern European languages and social sciences." Four universities in south-

ern Africa and the Utrecht University of the Netherlands have also established a network of cooperation on the basis of UNITWIN. Participating universities are the University of Zimbabwe, the Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, the University of Western Cape in South Africa and the University of Namibia. "There is a big difference between the universities of the North and South, and networking will help put an end to the 'brain drain' phenomenon," explained Mr. Lopez who, before coming to New York, had served as head of UNESCO's Regional Centre for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean and was in charge of modernising higher education. Mr. Lopez says UNESCO expects further cooperation from several U.S. universities involved in UNITWIN, and he plans to visit various American educational institutions to promote dialogue. Already, "one programme links Harvard University with the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. Another links New York University with a Senegal university," he noted.



Gustavo Lopez Ospina, director of the U.N. Liaison Office of UNESCO, says his agency is using satellite transmissions to promote education in the developing world



Among UNESCO's major achievements was the 1960s campaign to save Egyptian temples in the Nubia region when the Aswan Dam was built

lar, former secretary-general of the U.N., has been appointed president of the new commission, which has five honorary members and 12 members. Its objective is to strengthen "links between culture and development and to prepare a report on the issue," Mr. Lopez said. "This has never been the subject of a global study." The commission will also make recommendations on how development policy can be explained. "After the failure of numerous strategies of development, UNESCO has indicated that there is the need for another kind of development — human, sustainable and interdependent," Mr. Lopez said. The commission's first meeting is expected to take place in the first quarter of 1993, and the report, with concrete proposals, will be released in 1995. On another front, an expedition, which will include journalists, will travel in the next few months to the ancient Silk Roads — used by Marco Polo to travel from Mongolia to Rome. "A group has just returned from Mongolia, after retracing the Silk Roads project became operational in 1990 with the departure of a series of expeditions to the Desert Route in China and to the Maritime Route from Venice to Osaka. Mr. Lopez says this "concept of intellectual cooperation," supported by member countries, brings together scholars from a wide range of fields to travel ancient routes, visit museums and "meet and compare knowledge." UNESCO has organised 23 international seminars and about 200 academic meetings for the Silk Roads project — World News Link.

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Buy a Swiss bunker — but beware

By Kevin Liffey
Reuter
KREUZLINGEN, Switzerland — To a casual stroller, Triboltingen High Street presents a picturesque Swiss village idyll of half-timbered houses and apple trees, not far from the German border. But walk closer under the quaint attic windows, open one of the garage doors marked "no posters" — and you find yourself staring down the aperture of a machine-gun emplacement. Look across the street and another door suddenly looks suspicious. Sure enough, the timbering and windows are just so much camouflage concealing concrete bunkers for anti-tank spikes. All this is part of a network of 20,000 defence installations thrown up all over Switzerland from 1936 onwards to guard against the threat of invasion from Nazi Germany. The invasion never came, but the gun emplacements and tank traps remained, regularly used for exercises by Switzerland's 600,000 strong part-time army, but gradually growing obsolete. Now 4,000 bunkers are up for sale. If you can find them. "There are several reasons for selling," says Colonel Bruno Bommeli, entrusted with the job by the Federal Office of Army Construction and Fortresses. "The army is moving to a more dynamic, less static defence concept," he says. Even three-metre (10-foot) thick concrete walls are no match for modern ordnance. And as in other Western countries, the army is being trimmed and costs cut. At first glance, some of the installations look like a good chance to acquire some Swiss property at a knock-down price. One bijou bunker on Lake Constance near Kreuzlingen, intended to defend against beach landings, houses six. Swans cruise around its base and waddle onto the adjacent beach, and there is a view across the lake to Germany...or there would be if there were windows. "I can't really blame the parents. Our kids' futures are at stake," he said. A degree from a good university is so important that it can affect marriage prospects. The day of the college state-exam is an annual day of ritual agony. Families and friends stand vigil outside the examination room. Government offices, banks and large companies open up an hour late to clear the normally congested roads giving candidates a clear run to the campuses. Hundreds of police motorcyclists are deployed around the city to rush tardy students to their examination. "You would need a certain love of small spaces," admits Col. Bommeli, although he points out that some of the mothballed bunkers are practically self-contained towns and sleep 500. Still, no one should think Switzerland is simply selling its once prized defences off the supermarket shelf. Money is not likely to be a problem. Col. Bommeli will even give a bunker away in return for a promise to demolish it — admittedly not a cheap process. The first job for a buyer is to find the object of his or her desire. Not only are many well hidden, but for strategic reasons, there are no published lists and no advertisements. And then, the army is choosy about who it will sell to, because it does not want its reputation tarnished. "The buyer must demolish or agree to maintain the bunker," Col. Bommeli says. "We can't have installations being allowed to decay, because they will always be associated with the army." The big snag here is planning permission, a bureaucratic nicety that the army never had to bother with. Most bunkers would never be redesignated as dwellings without the expensive installation of plumbing, sewage disposal, ventilation, electricity...and windows. There would also be the problem of ensuring access, as many are buried in woodland or stuck on mountains where they can be supplied only by helicopter or cable winch. If those difficulties could be overcome, anyone wanting to demolish a bunker such as the one on Lake Constance to build a house would probably find the area was a nature protection zone, where building is forbidden. There are alternatives, such as using the bunkers as cellars for keeping wine or growing mushrooms, but Col. Bommeli admits these ideas are a little far-fetched. This may be the reason that only 50 of the installations have been sold off in five years, and that the army is resigned to demolishing most of them itself over the next 20. For the would-be bunker owner, there is just a hint of encouragement in the official documentation. Some citizens who have spent decades maintaining the bunkers conceive a strong emotional attachment to them, it says.

Exam pressure drives students to cheat

By Lim Yun-Suk
Reuter
SEOUL — When it comes to the chance of a university education for their children, parents the world over make sacrifices. But in South Korea, the pressure to secure a college place has grown so intense that scores of families have given in to temptation and now face ruin. Every day police are revealing the names of the latest suspects, most of them respectable parents, teachers and bright young students, involved in a series of university entrance examination frauds now unfolding nationwide. It seems normally law-

abiding parents have paid thousands of dollars to teachers and brokers to persuade the cream of the academic crop to sit college entrance examinations for their less able peers. In one case a teacher at a language institute offered one of his brightest former students \$13,000 to sit an entrance examination for another, a police spokesman said. The bright student, from Seoul's elite Yonsei University, was promised more after the exam by his teacher who had secured over \$100,000 from the mother of the real exam candidate. "Every time we question or arrest a person, we find

more people are involved. This case is getting big. It's shocking and amazing what parents would do," a police spokesman said. South Korean police have questioned 153 people since the examination fraud came to light late last month. More than 58 people have so far been arrested. Police are combing through the affairs of one seat of learning in particular, Kwangwoon University in northeast Seoul, suspected of having admitted more than 60 students by illicit means. These vary from simply paying students to sit-in for another student, changing exam marks on computers or simply soliciting donations

from parents of would-be students. "As a professor myself, I simply think it's disgraceful. Where is this society heading?" said H.S. Kim a lecturer in political science at Sogang University in Seoul. A senior state prosecutor has tendered his resignation after his son confessed he had sat entrance examinations for several others. "I could not hang out with my friends because I didn't have enough pocket money," the son, Noh Hyok-Chae, 20, said. "I first thought I was going to tutor students. Later I was too deep into it and couldn't get out," Noh tearfully confessed on national television.

Noh is one of several students who say they were lured into the scam after answering an advertisement inviting college students to tutor high school students. Noh received about \$6,300 up front to tutor a high school boy for a month. Further payments followed after he stopped his tutoring activities. The head of the tutorial college pushed Noh to substitute in the examination room by playing on his sense of obligation and by threatening to tell his parents about the payments. "I was shocked at first. But this is because of the pressures of society," the mother of two college students said

of the scandal. "I can't really blame the parents. Our kids' futures are at stake," he said. A degree from a good university is so important that it can affect marriage prospects. The day of the college state-exam is an annual day of ritual agony. Families and friends stand vigil outside the examination room. Government offices, banks and large companies open up an hour late to clear the normally congested roads giving candidates a clear run to the campuses. Hundreds of police motorcyclists are deployed around the city to rush tardy students to their examination. "You would need a certain love of small spaces," admits Col. Bommeli, although he points out that some of the mothballed bunkers are practically self-contained towns and sleep 500. Still, no one should think Switzerland is simply selling its once prized defences off the supermarket shelf. Money is not likely to be a problem. Col. Bommeli will even give a bunker away in return for a promise to demolish it — admittedly not a cheap process. The first job for a buyer is to find the object of his or her desire. Not only are many well hidden, but for strategic reasons, there are no published lists and no advertisements. And then, the army is choosy about who it will sell to, because it does not want its reputation tarnished. "The buyer must demolish or agree to maintain the bunker," Col. Bommeli says. "We can't have installations being allowed to decay, because they will always be associated with the army." The big snag here is planning permission, a bureaucratic nicety that the army never had to bother with. Most bunkers would never be redesignated as dwellings without the expensive installation of plumbing, sewage disposal, ventilation, electricity...and windows. There would also be the problem of ensuring access, as many are buried in woodland or stuck on mountains where they can be supplied only by helicopter or cable winch. If those difficulties could be overcome, anyone wanting to demolish a bunker such as the one on Lake Constance to build a house would probably find the area was a nature protection zone, where building is forbidden. There are alternatives, such as using the bunkers as cellars for keeping wine or growing mushrooms, but Col. Bommeli admits these ideas are a little far-fetched. This may be the reason that only 50 of the installations have been sold off in five years, and that the army is resigned to demolishing most of them itself over the next 20. For the would-be bunker owner, there is just a hint of encouragement in the official documentation. Some citizens who have spent decades maintaining the bunkers conceive a strong emotional attachment to them, it says.

Hillary's dress sends Sarah Phillips into spotlight

By Judith Schoolman
Reuter
NEW YORK — Who says the New York fashion world is nothing more than a hemline that's slightly off the mark? Not Sarah Phillips, the latest darling of the fashion press, who burst onto the scene after designing Hillary Rodham Clinton's inauguration ballgown. To Ms. Phillips, 37, who has been creating couture fashions under her own name for two years but has been little known outside the fashion press, New York is where the industry is, and where it probably always will be. Despite some American designers who manufacture their clothes in the Far East or who look to copy what is being shown in Paris and Milan, Phillips's designs are

strictly American. She acknowledges the high cost of doing business in Manhattan, where she and her husband, sculptor Tom Hatch, live and work. Transportation, wages and taxes all can take a bite out of a fledgling company's budget. But her downtown home is her workplace and her fashions are sewn about 20 blocks uptown. She said, "as long as you can maintain quality here" she'll stay in Manhattan. Life in the limelight has been fairly out of character for the seemingly reserved Phillips. The fact that Mrs Clinton's dress, her creation, might one day hang in the Smithsonian Institution's first ladies exhibit in Washington, has not yet sunk in. She does take herself seriously, despite her current

fashion cinderella status, and is in the couture business for the long haul. "I don't consider myself a flash in the pan," she said. To ensure that her fashions play on the fashion classics, she does not look to kids on the street for fashion inspiration. Her idols are Balenciaga, Geoffrey Beene, James Galanos (Nancy Reagan's favourite) and Karl Lagerfeld. She also looks to art and classical music, especially Mahler, to inspire her designs. According to Women's Wear Daily, Ms. Phillips's creations are "languid" and "classic...evening clothes that play tailored shapes against feminine fabrics." Her styles are mostly in neutral colours such as navy, heather, black and ivory. She

said that because she has a relatively limited line she does not have the capability of dying large numbers of colours. Mrs. Clinton's dress was a bit of a departure from her usual more classic styles, with a lace sheath and dramatic overskirt in blue velvet. She designed an iridescent violet and gold kimono to go over it. (For fashion trivia buffs, Mrs. Clinton's hose were sheer lavender). Despite a brutal environment for start-up business in general, Ms. Phillips has grand plans for her fashions because, she said, these are not run-of-the-mill, mass-produced items. Rather, they are "more intellectual, classic but progressive, cerebral." This means, you'll still want to wear them a year from now.

Ms. Phillips is no neophyte in the fashion world. She attended New York's Parsons School of Design, and worked for Yves Saint Laurent, Ralph Lauren and Christian Dior. Her company, Sarah Phillips New York, is two years old and sells her dresses and suits, which retail from \$1,400 to \$4,000, to a select few stores. One is Barbara Jean Ltd of Little Rock, Arkansas, thus the Hillary connection. In fact, Mrs. Clinton had selected a champagne silk suit to wear to the Democratic National Convention last summer. Later, when Hillary's husband won the election, Ms. Phillips sent her a sketch of a dress which became Mrs. Clinton's inauguration gown. Ms. Phillips herself cuts a dramatic swath, with a severe

Louise Brooks-style haircut and black pants outfit with cut-out sleeves. Mr. Hatch, her husband and adviser, often finishes her sentences and edits her comments, especially about subjects he thinks should be "off the record". While new to the fame game, Ms. Phillips and Mr. Hatch are seemingly uncomfortable with all the fuss following "Hillary's dress." But, as Mr. Hatch said, "If you are an established name, everything falls into place." In 1991-92, her first year in business, Ms. Phillips had gross sales of about \$500,000 and a line of about 30 designs. She said that a line of between 60 and 100 designs per season "would be nice" with the possibility of moving into licensing or perfume, an appealing pipe dream.

Allala Laouiti

The death has been announced in Tunis of Allala Laouiti, the long-time companion and intimate friend of President Habib Bourguiba. Mr. Allala came from the same hometown and social background as Mr. Bourguiba, and joined the group of young activists who in 1934 revitalised the Destour Party and created what came to be known as the Neo-Destour. The radical change in the method of political and civil opposition to successive French governments' interpretations of France's role in the protectorate over Tunisia established in the late 19th century inevitably led to repression of the new movement and its leaders. Mr. Laouiti shared with Mr. Bourguiba the frequent experience of prison, banishment to remote areas of Tunisia, and exile. When Mr. Bourguiba finally returned to Tunisia in 1956, and became first prime minister, and then president of the new Tunisian Republic, Mr. Laouiti occupied the position of private secretary and confidant of his friend. In his modest office in the presidential building in the Kasbah, he received daily the visits of hundreds of men and women coming to explain their problems and ask for assistance, which was rarely denied. Mr. Laouiti acted as ombudsman, keeper of the president's purse, and secretary. His invariable discretion, willingness to listen, and readiness to help were appreciated by all who came in contact with him. When Mr. Bourguiba ceased to be president, Mr. Laouiti continued to preside over the activities of the foundation created by Mr. Bourguiba's first wife, Sit Mufida, for the benefit of the blind and the handicapped, and thus completed a lifetime of service to his country which will not be forgotten by his many friends.

Cecil Hourani

Laser toys and gadgets

By Jean-Claude Elias

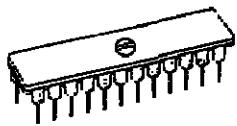
Some words have built-in magic. When applied to commercial products, such words do wonders. Actually double wonders. They delight both the person buying the product, who usually feels he or she has acquired an extraordinary item and the sales person, obviously happy, having made an easy and profitable operation.

Just add the term "turbo" to a car's name and watch the effect on the potential clients. The words "plus" or "pro" are devastating when used next to a computer programme or software's name. Quattro Pro, Fox Pro and dBASE Plus are programmes, excellent in other respects, that have certainly benefited from their names' extension to gain the highest levels of popularity and become best sellers.

Laser technology, originally used in sophisticated military applications and then in surgical operations, found its way to the personal computer—PC—user just a few years ago. The name in itself contains a good dose of appeal, whether the product is a laser printer or a laser disc. Although the technology has become widespread, affordable and has entered the mass consumer market, the name hasn't lost much of its evocative power. To be "in" one has to own some laser equipment.

The standard computer laser disc, often called a CD-ROM, for Compact Disc—Read Only Memory, a device which allows the reading, though not the writing or erasure of pre-recorded data discs, is becoming more and more popular, just like its twin brother, the music CD. It is amazing how many people would say that they have a laser

chip talk



disc rather than a CD or CD-ROM. Among the main advantages of the CD-ROM is its very high capacity, approximately 700 million characters on each disc, and its reliability which is far superior to the regular magnetic hard disk, of the so-called "Winchester" type.

Laser printers are not only fast, silent and technically superior to the poor man's matrix printer, they are above all "laser" beauties. Actually the prices of these printers have gone down dramatically in the past year and they are now hardly more expensive than high end matrix printers. An American manufacturer is proposing a Personal Laser Printer model for as little as \$800. When even the price becomes attractive how can one resist the glitter of the laser beam?

After all, when attractive names and gimmickry are used to sell us anything from washing powder to cars and TV sets, why not surrender to the flashy laser computer equipment, especially as it does present undeniable advantages?

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

BONERS

BANKRUPT: One who has divorced himself from debt in the hope of an early remarriage.
BUTCHER: A swindler on a small scale.
COMPOSER: A bad pianist with a good memory.
DIPLOMAT: A rabbit in silk hat.
ENGINEER: A man who can take a theory and put wheels on it.
HUSBAND: A man who has chased a woman until she has caught him.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TANTALIZING FACTS

★ **FINGERNAILS** grow faster than toenails.
★ **APPLE CIDER VINEGAR** is an excellent antiseptic.
★ **THERE ARE** about five thousand languages in the world.
★ **THE COST** of manufacturing the first atomic bomb was \$2 billion.
★ **GRAPE JUICE** will quench thirst promptly, even when taken in small amounts.
★ **SOCRATES**, the Greek philosopher, left no writings of his own. His philosophy is known primarily through the writings of his pupil, Plato.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

At the pharmacy

— Where is the nearest pharmacy? **Feyn akrab saydaliya?**
— All-night pharmacy. **Saydaliya lay-lyia.**
— At what time does it open/close? **Imta tiftah/t'sakkir?**
— I need something for ... **Ana ayez haja li ...**
★ A cold **Lil-bard**
★ Asthma **Lil-rabu'**
★ A cough **Lil-kuhha**
★ Diarrhea **Lil-is'hall**
★ Indigestion **li-soo el-hadm**
★ Insomnia **lil-arak/li-adam el-noum**
★ Nausea **Lil gathayan**
★ Constipation **Lil insak**
★ Fever **Lil-humma**

— Do I need a prescription for this medicine?
Lazem roshitta lihada el-dawa?
— It is an emergency case. **Hadi hala tari'a.**
— Can I wait for it? **Astannah?**
— I'd like adhesive tape. **Ayez shareet lasik.**
★ Antacid **Dawa dud al-humooda**
★ Antiseptic **Mutah'hir**

JOKES

A little girl was going to a party and her mother told her to be a good girl and to remember, when she was leaving, to thank her hostess.

When she arrived home the mother asked her if she had thanked her hostess, and the little girl replied:
"No, the girl in front of me did and the lady said, 'Don't mention it'—so I didn't!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A woman said to an author at a literary gathering: "My sides ache over your latest book." The author was delighted. "Oh, really," he said, "so you found it very amusing?"

"No," she replied. "The fact is I took it to bed and fell asleep on top of it!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ He: "They tell me Colonel Lively is a sexagenarian."
★ She: "The old fool; and at his age, too!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ An artist was staring at his blank canvas as if looking for an idea. "I want to paint a still life," he informed his friend. "but I'd like to do something different this time. I'm tired of fruit, buildings and landscapes."
"May I suggest," offered his friend, "that you paint a Scot teaching for a restaurant check?"

Shaker's family in Ramadan

By E. Yaghi

Shaker is a typical Jordanian head of his family. In all, he has eight children but only two now remain at home. His wife's name is Inan. Every day at seven in the morning, Shaker's two sons depart for school. Before the start of Ramadan, they would both grab a quick bite to eat and dash out the door. Now, their mother wakes up at about 4 a.m., makes a hot cup of tea and puts the leftovers from the Iftar of the day before. The boys groggily gather round the table with sleep still in their eyes and obviously on their minds. They and their parents eat what they feel like and drink their tea until they hear the call of the Mu'azzen before the sun rises. Both boys fast all Ramadan, a religious tradition that they have been pursuing since they were in the first grade.

One evening as they sat eating Iftar, Shaker's youngest son asked: "Dad, is it true that during Ramadan the gates of paradise are opened?"

"Yes," the father replied, nodding his head affirmatively. "During the holy month of Ramadan, the gates of paradise are opened and don't forget too as Prophet Mohammad said, 'there is a gate in paradise called Al Rayan and all those who observe fasts will enter through it,' on the Day of Resurrection."

He looked at his son intently. His youngest seemed to be deep in thought. After a moment the youth said: "Then our fasting will be rewarded twice. Once when we eat during each day of Ramadan and in the end, after we die, when we are rewarded by God for observing the fast which is one of five obligatory pillars of Islam!"

Inan added as she passed the salad: "Don't forget that fasting itself teaches us many things, among them discipline and patience, although I don't always feel that when my men are hungry, they are very patient."

The elder son said earnestly: "Well after all, Mom, you can't expect us to fast all day and then eat something mundane or boring. We should have some sort of bonus for our efforts!"

She laughed, scolding: "I'll agree as long as I don't have to spend 12 hours trying to satisfy your idea of what a bonus consists of! And at night not be faced with a mountain of dishes to wash as though I ran a restaurant and not a household."

"Come on," the younger coaxed, looking impatient. "Isn't that what mothers are for? By the way, when are you going to make the Gataiyef?"

"Before we get up to pray," Shaker said as he looked around at his family, "let me remind you all that Ramadan isn't just a month for eating and splurging. When you fast, remember how hungry you are and that at least, when the sun sets, you can eat and get full. But what about the poor? If you are hungry during the day, think how they are never

full at any time of the year. Be thankful to God for your many blessings and never forget the sufferings of others, such as the brave warriors of the Intifada, the persecuted Muslims in Bosnia, and the expellees who now spend Ramadan away from their homes and families not knowing what the future has in store for them."

"Remember too," he continued, "that Ramadan is a time of brotherly love and reaffirms the equality of mankind, for no matter what social status, wealth, or race, all break the fasting at the same time. Ramadan is a time of giving to the poor and though you forfeit food for many hours each day, you experience a spiritual joy, growth and maturity that may be more dormant other months of the year. Another important thought is that fasting is a shield from committing sins as well as expiation for sins already performed."

The younger son fiddled with his fork and then said pensively: "Dad, can you tell us a little more about Lailat Al Qadr?"

"Since that most wonderful night may soon be at hand, of course," the father replied, happy to share his knowledge. He sipped his tea before proceeding. "It is believed that Lailat Al Qadr falls on the 23rd, the 25th, or the 27th day of Ramadan. It transcends time, for through it, God dispels the darkness of ignorance by His revelation, the Holy Qur'an:

We have indeed revealed

This (Message)

In the Night of Power: (Lailat Al Qadr).

And what will explain

To thee what the Night

Of Power is?

The Night of Power

Is better than

A thousand months, ...Sura Al Qadr, Verses 1-3.

"Dad, I want to stay awake all night long on the 27th. I'm going to go to the mosque and remain there until al ishour!" the older exclaimed.

"By the way, don't forget to buy us some new clothes for the eid! I think we should do our shopping soon!" the youngest sibling said.

"Yes," agreed the mother and added, "remember to give money to the poor too before Ramadan finishes, you know, the alms for Iftar, where each member of the family has to pay a certain amount to those in need so that God will accept our fasting."

Ramadan, a sacred period in all Muslim households, is a time of fasting, sacrifice, dedication, prayer, worship, a time of love and a period when the oneness of mankind is re-emphasised. Happy Ramadan dear readers. May God bless you during this holy month and throughout the year. Have a happy eid wherever you go, whoever you may be!

The beauty myth

By Natasha Bukhari

Nowadays, so many women in the world find their lives dominated by food. Why are women continuously struggling with and against food and their own desire and need for it?

Dieting, eating, figure, and weight are increasingly becoming women's prime subject in their social gatherings. We are becoming more and more obsessed with weight and body shape everyday; so much so, that a large number of women, especially young women, are falling into the trap of eating disorders. Women are developing a love-hate relationship with food and their bodies. They've become so preoccupied with the idea of "thin is good, thinner is better, and thinnest is the best." With this in mind, you find women struggling against their bodily needs for nourishment to achieve "the best". This struggle causes the love-hate relationship. We love food because it gives us life, but we hate it because it makes us fat, and what could be worse than being a fat woman? Throughout the years, women have been treated as objects, and it is always a woman's body and fashion that are at the centre of changes in magazines, films, etc...Images of femininity have changed from Marilyn Monroe to Twiggy. At any moment in history, the image of the beautiful or even acceptable female body is limited to a very few body types. Those women who conform to these projected images are acknowledged as the beauties of their time. The actual reality is such that if you look at women's bodies, no one body looks like another. There are as many body types as there are bodies. And yet there is always one type that is more acceptable at any given time, and if women don't comply with that type they must experience personal and public humiliation, pain, shame and embarrassment of being not just different but inferior.

This emphasis on external appearance forces the woman to look at herself through others' eyes, as well as to view her body as the main attribute of her personality. Obviously these ideal media images are very hard to attain, therefore, most women will never be satisfied with the way they look. They start loathing their bodies and to many women, their body becomes a burden they have to carry, a trap, an enemy. They punish themselves for not being able

to conform to the prevalent ideal body type. Hence the development of life threatening eating disorders anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and compulsive eatings, where women become out of touch with their bodies. This is expressed in an extreme way by anorexics and compulsive eaters. They are both distanced from their bodies and their body image is distorted to the point that they do not acknowledge their bodies as theirs. They disembodied themselves by living in their heads and develop the feeling that their spirit is a prisoner in the cage of that body which has let them down by not conforming, and therefore deserves severe punishment. It becomes unworthy of their love and respect, or much so that some women starve themselves to death while others stuff themselves to the point of feeling sick. These extreme attitudes are manifestations of bodily abuse.

It is about time for women to realise that they have been taught to see themselves from the outside as objects until they become prey to the huge fashion and diet industries, which promise the woman, through her looks, a man, a family, success, friendship, love, and happiness. Many artificially thin women who have achieved the goal of ultimate beauty, would tell you that they paid too high a price, and the outcome, contrary to the promise, is a sick body as well as a sick mind.

Women owe it to themselves to refuse self-evaluation according to an image presented in the media. They should make peace with their bodies and assert themselves as unique, whole, and different individuals, rather than just commodities for others to observe, criticise and evaluate. The woman's body is her own and no one else has the right to tell her what her body should look like, for it is not public property available for industries to mould so that it'd conform to particular stereotypes. It is our duty as women to rebel against these destructive perceptions of billboard images of womanhood by proving that we can be comfortable with our bodies without feeling obliged to "conform" to projected ideals, which are aimed at women for no other reason but to keep them under the impression that if not guided, even their most basic instincts of survival can "get out of control", thus leading them to inferiority.

Let's not submit to another fatal conspiracy aimed at underestimating our intelligence to the extent of depriving us from our right of self-respect.

The day I got my grades

By Nizar Yaghi

(To Tawjihi students everywhere)

Perhaps one of the most critical situations that we students face, besides trying to convince our teachers to treat us as human beings, is when we get our grades. But what is so critical about getting a grade one might ask?

Well, I think that the majority of the students have consumed all their strength and energy in order to reach those dreams which they had imagined since childhood, not to mention the psychological stress and pressure felt from the great expectations of friends and relatives.

When the day of receiving our grades finally did arrive, some of us thought that we wouldn't live long enough to get the results. When our grades were announced if anyone ever wished to be in hell, then this was a suitable time for this wish to come true. With red faces, teary eyes,

trembling hands and rapidly beating hearts, all the poor students, or almost all of us, headed towards our homes wondering what the reaction of our parents would be.

Those who remained solemnly sat down on some benches as if nothing at all had happened, trying to figure out what the meaning of life was, with their hands supporting their smudge stained cheeks.

A stranger in Jordan would have found it difficult to figure out such a phenomenon of mutual shock on the faces of so many students and perhaps this scene would have created in him a peculiar kind of terror, like the sight of the ship, "Marie Celeste" abandoned at sea with its galley fires peacefully burning, its tranquil decks bright in the sun-

The remaining question in our minds is: Isn't this annual catastrophe ever going to stop?

The writer is a grade 12 student at Al Hussein College in Amman.

PEN PALS

Dear Sirs,

I am a male of 50 years, interested in collecting stamps and other philatelic items from your country. I would also be pleased to get different information about your country. I think that a pen-pal from Central Europe could be also interesting for your subscribers.

Please publish my name and address to your subscribers.

Max Fink
Box 42, A-8073 Feldkirchen
Austria

Robert Redford crosses another river

By Robert Shelton

LONDON — Superstar actors have the ability to become the characters they portray, and we often remember them as the characters they have created. Robert Redford will certainly be remembered best as the elusive Great Gatsby (1974), as the Watergate reporter in *All the President's Men* (1976) or maybe the impudent bandit in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), where he shared the spotlight with Paul Newman.

The newly released *A River Runs Through It* has Redford's fingerprints all over it — which is all the more remarkable because he doesn't appear on screen but is the narrator and director. This nostalgic hymn to nature and family life is the third film he has directed. His first, *Ordinary People*, won him an Oscar.

As Redford spoke of the film and his concerns for the environment and for quality independent film production, we see just how much of his personal philosophy and motivation were involved in bringing to fruition this best-selling memoir of a Montana-based Scottish Presbyterian minister's family. His own roots are from Scotland and Ireland which may explain why he was drawn to this story.

Obtaining the rights from author Norman Maclean took five years, but the lure of a tale about America's vanishing west was strong. "Not so very long ago," Redford said in a recent interview, "we were a young country. Now those beginnings in the west are almost gone. I felt a certain sadness for what we've lost." Beyond that, Redford says, he was interested in the role nature played in shaping people's lives. "Nature in much of the world has been pushed further, and further out, so it

doesn't play the key role it used to."

It was not easy to raise \$12 million to produce the film, the star recalled. "The book was a very literary and lyrical piece. Film is not a literary medium, and lyricism from America does not go down very well. Mysticism and lyricism in film is treated with a great deal of cynicism," Redford explained that he found a certain grace and dignity in the film's central metaphor of fly fishing. "Beyond that," he added, "the taciturn family that cannot really help its doomed younger son fascinated me with that very dark and complicated area of the unbreakable bond of families, particularly sibling love and rivalry."

Starting with a rebellious youth, Redford has successfully managed the paradox of prospering within the confines of Hollywood while firmly keeping his distance from the movie world. He has superimposed on his star status the image of a mythic, independent character — almost an outlaw, at least by Hollywood standards. In his early years, he says, he was interested in painting as he was in acting. "I was blonde, and actors who go anywhere in Hollywood are generally dark. Blonde male stars never seem to make it, and that kind of discrimination really bothered me."

Redford was brought up in California and spent time on Malibu Beach. "My family was filled with many of the goals and patterns of the family in *A River Runs Through It*. Of course I was going to resent any stereotyping. Maybe it pushes you a little bit harder to break through the stereotype," he said. Once the golden boy of Hollywood, Redford has retained great clout as he eases — at 55 — into middle age. Although one of Hollywood's



Although he does not appear in the movie *A River Runs Through It*, Robert Redford's influence is strongly felt

magic names, he escaped much of the film world's madness by living with his three children and wife, from whom he is amicably separated, on a ranch in Utah. There, he founded and is president of the influential Sundance Film Institute and Festival, designed as a showcase for new talents.

Redford doesn't look like one of the screen's most political activists, but his concern for social justice and for environmental protection have long goaded him. Last year, Bill Clinton, who was courting Redford's active support,

visited him on the set of the comedy thriller *Sneakers*. Clinton won his passive backing. "I'm happy he is president. We needed change, and after 12 years of bad handling of the environment and education, it's good to have someone who is concerned about these things in the White House," Redford commented.

In his early years, Redford says luck helped his career build momentum. "My period of greatest struggle was between 1959 — when I started in New York theatre

— and 1963, when I was in an off-Broadway play that was so successful that film offers began to come in." Between those years there was a lot of apprenticeship in live and filmed TV and theatre. "One film just seemed to lead to another. In the mid-sixties, I stopped acting because I wasn't sure I wanted to be an actor." In 1961, he formed Wildwood Enterprises which was to produce *Downhill Racer*, *The Candidate* and *All the President's Men*.

After the enormous success of *Butch Cassidy* came roles in *Jeremiah Johnson*, about a nature-loving, independent frontiersman, a romance, *The Way We Were*, and a comedy, *The Sting*, for which he got an Oscar Best Actor nomination. Of these triumphs, Redford said, "I just kept stepping along. There was no long spell when I was completely down. I was fortunate."

Many would say that independent film production is fortunate to have Redford's advocacy of quality, small-budget work. In 1980, he founded the Sundance Institute, based at his Utah ranch, which has sprouted a festival. The recently concluded 1993 festival was particularly successful in drawing top-quality entries from many countries, especially in the documentary section. Presented outside the competition, the Australian documentary *Black Harvest* about a mixed-race coffee plantation owner was especially well received. With the scope of a classical tragedy it depicts the clash between tribalism and capitalism.

Redford sees the Sundance Festival as an incubator for young film makers to make necessary mistakes without causing financial disasters. This year the event attracted 200 reporters and countless agents and independent film executives. The fact that

Quentin Tarantino, of *Reservoir Dogs* fame, and Steven Soderbergh's *Sex, Lies and Videotape* (1989) came out of the institute workshops is a clue to the impact of Sundance.

"A large part of my absence from films in the 1980s was my choice of doing other things, like Sundance. I worked very hard as an actor in the 1970s...I felt uneasy about not having spent enough time with my family. I worried about life going so quickly that you wake up one day and your family is up and out without you ever having connected with them," Redford explained. "Directing my first film was very satisfying. Then, I thought, I was going to take two years off and put something back into my industry, with Sundance, and I wanted to do political work on the environment. I underestimated how much work there is in fund-raising. Those two years became six."

In person and in most of his films, Redford leaves the impression of a man of quiet integrity fighting for decency in an industry often driven by expediency and greed. He worries about what has been done to the richness of the American west, about the drift in films toward super-violence and gadgetry while human values are discarded. A recent news article in a slick magazine portrayed him as a sort of outlaw-outsider who wants to keep Hollywood straight, but "there was too much myth-making there," he commented.

A River Runs Through It reveals just how much Redford thinks of his own family background and what he owes to old Scots-Irish family values — in contrast to the new California. And against all odds, his cherished, lyrical, mystical film has already had a strong impact on pragmatic America — World News Link.

For Louis Malle, sex still has the power to shock

By Andrew Gumbel
Reuter

PARIS — Thirty years after the sexual revolution, the relaxation of screen censorship and any number of kiss-and-tell political scandals, it is a wonder that sex still has the power to shock.

But in the hands of Louis Malle, a film director with a record of provoking audiences and critics, the subject can still seem both shock and highly topical.

Malle's latest work, *Damage*, is a highly charged story of a British cabinet minister who becomes involved, almost despite himself, with his son's girlfriend and so leads himself and his family on an inevitable path to disaster.

The film, starring Jeremy Irons and Juliette Binoche, was opened to rave reviews and full houses in France.

Its subject is uncomfortable — almost unfashionable in an age of AIDS and "family values", when sex is supposed to be safe or not practised at all.

Unlike recent Hollywood blockbusters on the same theme, such as *Fatal Attraction* or *Basic Instinct*, there is no attempt to moralise about the insidious power of sexual passion. *Damage* is a tragedy of human frailty in which the characters, drawn from the British and French bourgeoisie, find that their cherished notions of moral certainty simply do not exist.

"It's a description of a world without redemption, where people are on a strange path of self-destruction," Malle said in an interview.

"My film could very well be a reaction to the fact that, because of AIDS in particular, sex has become dangerous and almost obsolete in our society...the planet is overpopulated anyway so it seems the less we have sex the better."

Several times during his distinguished career, the French director has explored unpalatable subjects and challenged conventional thinking on sex to electrifying effect.

Les Amants (The Lovers, 1958) anticipated the social changes of the 1960s by speaking openly about sexual pleasure. *Le Souffle Au Coeur* (Murmur Of The Heart, 1971) dealt with incest and *Pretty Baby* (1977), his first U.S. film, was a study of child prostitution in turn-of-the-century New Orleans.

While *Les Amants*, made at the beginning of Malle's career, depicts sexual fulfillment as an escape from bourgeois hypocrisy, *Damage* shows it as an unequivocal agent of destruction in much the same environment.

Malle's work, like the sexual revolution, has unex-

pectedly come full circle. "I think predictability is the rule and I'm completely the opposite...I'm interested in aspects of the truth that go against preconceived ideas, including mine," he said.

"I try to come up with character behaviour that is irrational and surprising because I think it's truer to my observation of life...I like spectators to be disturbed."

The sense of impending doom in *Damage* is established from the opening scene, in which the politician, Stephen Fleming (Irons) encounters his prospective daughter-in-law Anna (Binoche) at an embassy reception.

The two exchange glances so long as to make the audience wince with discomfort. When they later throw themselves at each other, they are incapable of communicating except through disconcerting violent lovemaking. They neither speak nor kiss.

"I ended up with a film where words are of little importance. It's all about looks and silences," Malle said. "Ideally I would have liked to do it in the 1920s when film was silent, just with music and no words."

For Stephen the affair is a revelation after a long, apparently happy marriage and a successful career. Anna, on the other hand, has a scarred past and understands how to survive even as she sabotages her chances of happiness with Stephen's similarly untroubled son Martyn.

Seeing Stephen's family slowly implode is like watching a Greek tragedy — once events are set in motion, there is no escape and the tension is unrelenting.

"The tension doesn't come from the story or from the actors, the tension comes from me," Malle confided. "Even the simplest scenes had the potential to turn into caricature. It was like walking on a tightrope."

The stress took its toll and last September, just four weeks before his 60th birthday, Malle underwent heart surgery in Los Angeles where he shares a home with his American actress wife Candice Bergen.

Although apparently back on form and looking remarkably youthful, Malle has no immediate plans for another feature film. Instead, he would like to return to documentary making, the medium which launched his career in the mid-1950s.

"As I get older I get more and more impatient with the process of filmmaking which is so slow, so elaborate," he said.

"Everybody's making their own movie and they all take themselves very seriously. It's like a big machine you have to get going every day like a locomotive."

Belfast actor bids for Oscar as IRA gunman

By Paul Majendie
Reuter

BELFAST — Belfast actor Stephen Rea, married to a convicted Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomber, has won a Hollywood Oscar nomination for playing an IRA gunman.

But the tousle-haired actor who won critical acclaim for his starring role in *The Crying Game* has stressed it is not a propaganda film.

In 1983, he married Dolours Price, who along with her sister served eight years of a life sentence for a car bombing outside the Old Bailey courthouse in London. She was released on medical grounds.

Rea is currently starring on New York's Broadway playing the role of an Irish hos-

tage in Beirut in Frank McGuinness' *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*.

When questioned about Dolours Price on American television, he said: "That is my wife's past, she's not involved any more. She doesn't apologise for that and I am not going to apologise for her."

With six Oscar nominations, *The Crying Game* is Ireland's most successful film since *My Left Foot* scooped five nominations and won two awards in 1990.

Rea, born in 1947, the son of a Belfast bus driver, dismissed those who criticised him for portraying an IRA gunman who has moral doubts and turns his back on the guerrilla campaign against Britain in Northern Ireland.

He told the Irish Times: "Are we to believe that people involved in the Republican movement never say 'I have had enough'?"

"The Crying Game looks at a guy who has to live in close proximity to a (kidnapped) British soldier, the enemy, and sees that he is a regular guy."

"And he is not able to go on with what he has been trained to do. You would want to have a pretty rough view of Catholics in the north to say that couldn't happen."

"And people who want to just view the IRA as psychopaths are more interested in pushing propaganda than in truth. This film is not about propaganda."

Rea, who started out with Dublin's Abbey State Theatre and then moved

to Britain's National Theatre, has for a decade been a fiercely committed actor taking to every corner of the island of Ireland.

Together with playwright Brian Friel of *Dancing At Lughnasa* fame, he co-founded the Field Day Theatre Company which showed how theatre can rebuild bridges in a deeply divided land.

Throughout the 1980s, it went on tour, playing to packed houses across British-ruled Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic with a series of thought-provoking plays.

Rea revelled in the challenge of playing in an opulent opera house one night and a ramshackle village hall with bad acoustics the next.

"People here are hungry for questions. They are living

in an unresolved political situation. So they are interested in anything you do that might cast light," he said.

Rea, whose first starring film role was in Neil Jordan's *Angel* in 1982, decided to devote more time to films in the 1990s.

But he thought long and hard before accepting the role from Jordan in *The Crying Game* that has now propelled him on to the international film scene.

He confessed to one London newspaper: "I suppose it is inevitable that people will make assumptions because of my marriage even if I wish they would not. Equally, those assumptions are likely to be wrong."

"I am not involved in politics at all. My wife is not

involved in politics at all. At the same time you cannot be born in the north of Ireland and not be political. The situation there is a pollution of your thinking."

"There is no future in tribalism, the pressure people live under is appalling, a lot of people have become involved in the troubles and a lot more young people will become involved which is regrettable."

He is philosophical about his chances of carrying off a coveted Academy Award, even if one of his own sons is appropriately called Oscar.

"It's going to be a mad, crazy evening and I shall enjoy it because I don't expect to win," he said. "It would be harder if I was Al Pacino and really wanted and expected to win."

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, March 11

8:30 Comedy Series

9:10 Forever Green

Jack and his neighbours find out that the river which irrigates their land is polluted.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Fire In The Dark

A story about an old woman who falls down in her own home, thus, requiring permanent care and attention.

Friday, March 12

8:30 Billy

Mary finds out that her teenage son, David, is into the habit of smoking secretly. Billy's role is to try to convince David to stop.

9:10 E.N.G.

The news team at Channel 10 try to rescue a fifteen-year-old Indian girl who was kidnapped at the age of four and sold to white parents through an adoption agency.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Columbo

Columbo investigates in the drowning incident of Eric Wagner, the son and only heir of a sports team corporation owner.

Saturday, March 13

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

A collection of hilarious video clips and situations from Australia, Japan, France and Spain. This episode also includes the \$100,000 grand prize.

9:00 Perspective

A local talk show, prepared

and presented by Mureed Hammad

9:30 Science Workshop

This episode deals with the effect of pollution on the ozone layer, and the various measuring equipment used for analysing environmental and atmospheric pollution.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Night Of The Hunter

Hadder is put in prison when he is accused of stealing \$50,000. Another inmate tries to learn the whereabouts of the hidden money, so he kills Hadder. When the inmate gets out of jail, he goes to Hadder's home town to find the money.

Sunday, March 14

8:30 Who's The Boss?

An old friend sends his

daughter to Tony so as to teach her some manners and good behaviour.

9:10 Equinox

This episode talks about the rapid scientific evolution which took place in Japan after World War II and its competition with the major markets in the field of modern technology.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Simon And Simon

A popular TV journalist makes a deal with someone to kill him, but not for real — so as to get a story. The two brothers come in when the killing deal becomes real.

Monday, March 15

8:30 Step By Step

9:10 Marlin Bay

10:00 News In English

10:20 Jordan Weekly

10:40 Vietnam

Megan leads a demonstration in Sidney against the Vietnam War.

Tuesday, March 16

8:30 The Powers That Be

The comedy comes back with new episodes mainly revolving around the blunders of the senator's family.

9:10 Dirtwater Dynasty

Emma manages to regain her father's land from Richard and Nancy finds Guy her husband who has deserted her.

10:00 News In English

10:20 The Big Man

Jack Klimenti investigates drug smuggling from Italy to

America, and it is believed that some companies insured at Lloyds are behind the smuggling operation.

Wednesday, March 17

8:30 Saved By The Bell

The students in Bayside undergo an exam to enter college. But the big surprise comes when Zak and Jessie learn their grade average.

9:00 Local Programme — "One Step Ahead"

This programme sheds light on pioneering-business women in Jordan, revolving around two women, one who owns a clothes factory and another who runs a food factory. It is prepared and presented by Nisreen Al Tal.

9:30 After Us The Deluge

Man with his carelessness and indulgence is destroying the



Paola Dionisotti as Lady Pat in *Forever Green* on Thursday at 9:10

green forests of the world. If this state of destruction continues, within 100 years all the forests will vanish from

the face of the earth.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Noble House

Experts report discovery of cause of multiple sclerosis

SAN DIEGO, California (R) — Scientists at Stanford University and in San Diego said they had discovered the cause of multiple sclerosis (MS), a finding that may lead to therapies and a cure for the degenerative disease.

Multiple sclerosis is estimated to afflict more than 250,000 people in the United States alone. The disease forces the body's immune system to attack its central nervous system. It typically afflicts people between 20 and 40 years of age.

The scientific team, led by Lawrence Steinman, professor of neurology at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, published its findings in the latest edition of the prestigious medical journal, *Nature*.

Prof. Steinman, who is also chief scientist of immunology at Neurocrine Biosciences Inc., a San Diego pharmaceutical company, said in a statement that Neurocrine had begun developing a protein-based therapy to halt the disease.

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The report in *Nature* said the Stanford team made their discovery by analyzing the T-Cell Receptor genes (TCR) from the brains of 16 multiple sclerosis patients.

attacks the Myelin Basic Protein (MBP), a component of the myelin sheath that surrounds nerve fibers.

"We identified the TCR gene sequence that bound to the common MBP fragment found in MS patients," Prof. Steinman said. "By knowing this sequence we can now proceed to develop therapeutic treatments to combat the disease."

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, which helped fund Prof. Steinman's work, cautioned that the discovery might not include all forms of multiple sclerosis.

"Nonetheless, this report is an important step in identifying the specific immune system cells involved in multiple sclerosis," the society said in a statement.

Neurocrine said in its statement it has an exclusive license for the technology developed at Stanford. The company said it had already begun developing a protein-based therapy that can cross the blood-brain barrier and interfere with the T-cells' ability to bind the MBP segment, thereby halting the disease.

Prof. Steinman described the protein therapy as "the most practical approach with the shortest development time before proceeding to clinical trials."

"We will also be pursuing the development of small molecules that will either remove or inactivate these T-cells from the body and possibly begin work on a vaccine that will disable the specific T-cells that initiate the attack."

"All three methods focus on blocking or disabling the very specific immune response that causes this disease, without suppressing the patient's entire immune system," he added.

Gary Lyons, president and chief executive officer of Neurocrine, said scientists had known for 20 years that multiple sclerosis was an autoimmune disease, but until now had not been able to identify which cells caused the immune response.

Neurocrine was organized in January 1992 to develop novel pharmaceutical products to treat diseases resulting in ageing and stress-related dysregulation of the nervous, immune and endocrine systems.

Studies link vasectomies, prostate cancer, but experts urge caution

By Brenda C. Coleman
The Associated Press
CHICAGO — Two new studies suggest vasectomies increase men's likelihood of developing prostate cancer, but outside experts question the findings and urge men with vasectomies not to get them reversed.

Men considering the procedure should weigh the benefits and risks of various birth-control methods before choosing one, along with their partners, doctors said.

"Every form of contraception, as well as practicing no contraception, has its risks," said Dr. Edward Giovannucci, leader of the new studies and an epidemiologist at Harvard-affiliated Brigham and

Women's Hospital. Findings appear in the latest issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Prior studies have been conflicting. Four have linked vasectomies to an increased risk of prostate cancer, which killed 32,000 U.S. men in 1991, more than any other kind of cancer except lung. Dr. Giovannucci and his colleagues said.

But three other previous studies found no such link, said Dr. Stuart S. Hwang, a urology professor at the University of Virginia Medical School in Charlottesville. He did not participate in the new work.

"These two papers are well done epidemiological studies, which have to be considered seriously but do not prove that vasectomy causes prostate cancer," Dr. Hwang said Tuesday.

"This is what's called a weak association epidemiologically (statistically across a population)," he said. "There is no good biologic rationale...no known reason why a vasectomy would increase your chances of getting prostate cancer."

About 450,000 vasectomies are done yearly in the United States. The procedure — in which the tiny tube carrying sperm from the testicles is cut — is one of the safest, most reliable and popular forms of

birth control. It is the method chosen by about 14 per cent of all contraceptive users.

But doctors should tell men who are considering vasectomies about the new data, Dr. Giovannucci and Dr. Hwang agreed.

Each new study found about a 60 per cent elevated risk of prostate cancer among men who had undergone vasectomies.

"We found 113 cases of prostate cancer among (a total of) about 22,000 men who had had a vasectomy," Dr. Giovannucci said by telephone. "This compares to rate of 70 cases per 22,000 among men who didn't have a vasectomy."

The elevated risk occurred about 15 minutes to perform at a cost of a few hundred dollars — almost always covered by health insurance — reversing it requires about two hours and costs \$4,000 to \$10,000, Dr. Hwang said.

Reversal is rarely covered by health insurance, he said.

Men who have had vasectomies more than 20 years ago should get tested yearly for prostate cancer, including a finger rectal exam and a prostate-screening blood test, the Urological Association said.

That differs little from previous guidelines of the association and the American Cancer Society, which say all men ages 50 to 70 should get the tests annually.

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Study links vegetable margarine to heart disease

LONDON (R) — Substituting vegetable margarine for butter and other animal fat could cause, rather than prevent, heart disease, according to a study.

But the U.S. study, in the British medical journal *Lancet*, did not recommend people go back to lathering their baked potatoes with butter. Rather, it suggested that what you think is good for you may not really be so healthy.

The findings supports other studies that have found hardened vegetable fats can be as dangerous to health as animal fats.

"Intakes of foods that are major sources of (fatty acids formed by hydrogenated vegetable oils) — margarine, cookies, cake and white bread — were each significantly associated with higher risks of coronary heart disease," it said.

The team of Harvard University medical school researchers, headed by Dr. Walter Willett, surveyed 85,095 women in 1980.

"During eight years of follow up, there were 431 new cases of coronary heart disease," the study said.

"These findings support the hypothesis that consumption of partially hydrogenated vegetable oils may contribute to occurrence of coronary heart disease."

The culprits are "trans" fatty acids formed by hydrogenating vegetable oils to solidify them for margarine or shortening, the study said.

It said they could influence the metabolism of essential fatty acids in the body.

The women surveyed took in most of their "trans" acids from vegetable sources — 60 per cent — as opposed to 40 per cent from beef or dairy fat and other animal sources.

Women who ate four or more teaspoons of margarine a day had a 50 per cent higher risk of heart disease.

Those women who ate a lot of animal fat tended to smoke more than those who looked to vegetable sources for their fat, and women who ate more fats containing the "trans" acids also ate more fat in general.

But the study found a strong link to heart disease caused by intake of the hardened vegetable fats even when women exercised, took vitamins and took other precautions that are generally considered to prevent heart disease.

"Our findings must add to concern that the practice of partially hydrogenating vegetable oils to produce solid fats may have reduced the anticipated benefits of substituting these oils for highly saturated fats, and instead contributed to the occurrence of coronary heart disease," the study said.

"Although this study included only women, the fact that blood lipids are related to intake of 'trans' isomers similarly in men and in women suggests that the findings are likely to apply to men too," it added.

Red wine chemical tied to heart benefit

LONDON (AP) — It may be the tint that makes red wine good for the heart.

A new study on colour chemicals called Phenols backs earlier research that suggested red wine reduces the risk of heart disease, scientists say.

The red wine debate was sparked by a study attributing the low rate of heart disease

among people in southern France to their steady consumption of red wine.

"A lot of people didn't believe it because of so many confounding effects — the easy life of the Mediterranean and so on," said Dr. Edwin Frankel, a chemist at the University of California, Davis.

Dr. Frankel suspects that

Phenols thwart the nasty effects of LDL, a type of cholesterol tied to increased risk of heart disease.

His research, based on mixing Phenols with LDL in a test tube, was published in the Feb. 20 issue of *Lancet*, an international medical journal.

Professor Timothy Peters, a clinical biochemist at King's

College in London, said "it's a reasonable hypothesis," but needs to be tested in humans.

Prof. Peters is an expert in alcohol misuse and toxicity.

Dr. Frankel said his research shows that red wine Phenols are antioxidants. Antioxidants, such as Vitamins A and E, mop up free radicals, or highly charged particles, that are linked to

an increased risk of heart disease.

Some scientists believe that the interaction of free radicals with LDL prompts heart disease.

The California investigators mixed the Phenols with blood samples from two volunteers, then added copper to speed the free radical reaction.

They found that the Phenols reduced the chances of LDL mixing with free radicals by 98 per cent in one sample and 60 per cent in the other sample.

Prof. Peters said more research is needed to find out whether Phenols actually get into the bloodstreams of red wine drinkers.

Previously, Cornell University researchers attributed red wine's benefits to a different chemical, Resveratrol. It

is an antifungal agent in grape skins.

The Cornell University researchers speculated Resveratrol is good for the heart because it is the key ingredient in a Japanese folk remedy used to prevent clogged arteries.

That study was published last year in the *American Journal of Enology and Viticulture*.

Dr. Frankel said his team of researchers studied Resveratrol and found that it, too, has antioxidant powers.

"I think they both contribute to the health benefits of red wine but I don't know how much the Resveratrol contributes compared to the other compounds," he said.

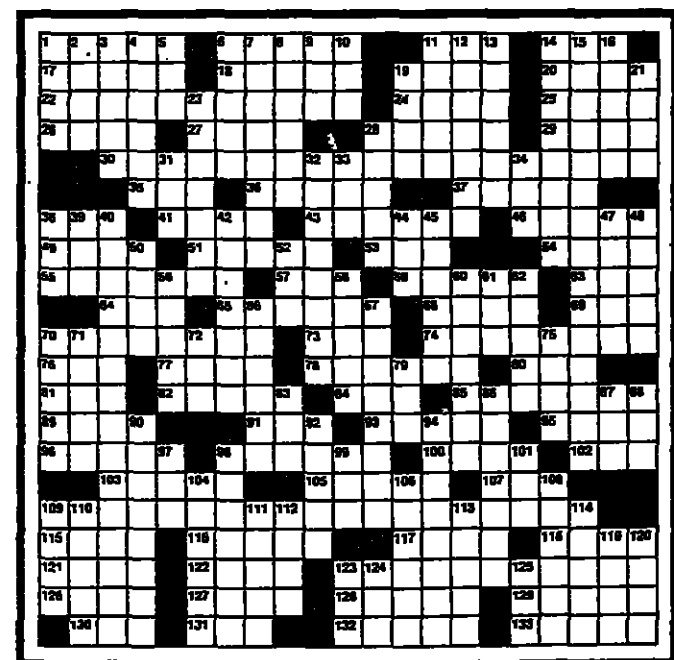
The Phenols are 1,000 times more concentrated in red wine than Resveratrol, Dr. Frankel said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

BUZZWORDS
By William Canine

ACROSS
1 Ancient physician
2 Hat
3 Thatch
4 Major abbr.
14 Alas letters
17 Pedro's pal
18 Is painful
19 Joe
20 Following
22 Yellowjackets
24 Maldives capital
25 TV part
26 Bar/club
27 Abn. for one
28 Ready for
29 Legation
30 Ready for
31 Brings on big
32 Noble
33 Not worth a
34 US partner, Albert

DOWN
1 Gaily
2 So be it
3 Detroit team
4 Wading birds
5 Block of wood
6 Total confusion
7 Trade
8 Ward
9 Wall St. letters
10 Forest tree
11 Memento
12 Caren of Valera
13 Nap
14 Tall and short
15 U.S. Porter novel
16 Wheel holders
17 Whim
18 Burial in
19 Marsh birds



Last Week's Cryptograms

- Top boxer from Mexico fought champ in raging bout.
- Vendor met vague "lifetime guarantee" terms by arranging untidy demise of buyer. Gaily, murder one.
- Musicians chaffed over a few examples of weird species of beings that were wonderfully good at becoming extinct.
- Self-defending traitor pronounced: "It ain't the school, it's the principal of the thing."

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. JSSY CRIMPAYS: LUCQAK IAB SWUSWN
ZWSUCY QPS QARI KSQR MR PMZISTY
LSY XARAYCUUT ZNMJMRX WUCZZ.

—By Rita Salvato

2. HQPOPKUCFYZYTCZS YCHOP HIXPO TC
XUP ATEE MPSETOPM: "IP IPESHAP HFO
KZSP SFYCHAPY. TTM IP HEPQ CUPA
TEB"

—By Eugene T. Malinka

3. WURCW COCHORI WLIH WORKED BE
WUEDL RI TRIMS. TRIPS TRIPUS HE PLB
KREGM.

—By Ed Huddleston

4. GLEK FLEK GEF WAWTTIK WEALTH HIX
GDEEDLY DY GREEDLY.

—By Frank N. Stein

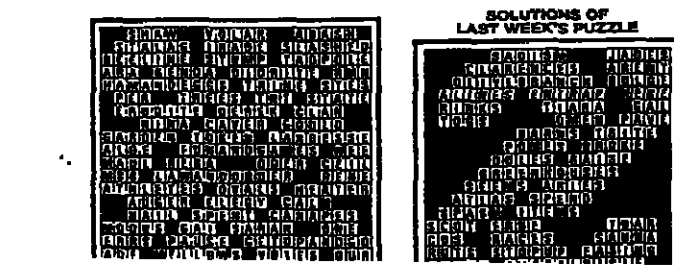
Diagramless 10 x 10, By James Barwick

ACROSS
1 Powdery residue
2 Marshes
3 "The Old Man
4 Distant
5 Nursemaid
6 Dances over
7 Socks to
8 Contagiously
9 Shopkeeper
10 Narcotic drug

DOWN
1 Mud
2 "Tara —
3 "Tara —
4 "Tara —
5 "Tara —
6 "Tara —
7 "Tara —
8 "Tara —
9 "Tara —
10 "Tara —

DOWN
1 Wine city
2 Two-wheeled
3 String
4 Electric calls
5 Khayyam
6 Festive occasion
7 Latin
8 Trick
9 Far from
10 Japanese money
11 Bar 24
12 Rungs down

DOWN
1 Mud
2 "Tara —
3 "Tara —
4 "Tara —
5 "Tara —
6 "Tara —
7 "Tara —
8 "Tara —
9 "Tara —
10 "Tara —



Unhealthy habits, violence cost \$42.9b yearly in U.S. health care

By Brenda C. Coleman
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Unhealthy habits and violence cost the United States more than \$42.9 billion in direct medical expenses every year, the American Medical Association (AMA) estimated in a report.

Related expenses such as lost productivity boost the total to more than \$189 billion annually, according to the 22 page report, titled "Factors Contributing to the Health Care Cost Problem."

"Billions of dollars are spent each year treating medical conditions that could be avoided," said Dr. Daniel Johnson Jr., speaker of the AMA's House of Delegates. "Violence, drugs, alcohol and tobacco are wreaking havoc on our health system."

Dr. Johnson added in a statement accompanying the report.

Smoking and alcohol abuse cause the biggest financial drain, even though violence and illicit drugs often grab more headlines, Dr. Johnson said.

and Medicaid payments for tobacco related illnesses in 1985, the report noted. It did not estimate indirect costs to the nation for such illnesses.

Tobacco use is blamed for 500,000 annual premature deaths, and accounts for 32 per cent of fatal cancers, 21 per cent of fatal heart disease and 88 per cent of fatal chronic lung disease, it said.

Alcohol-related health-care costs are \$13.5 billion annually, most of those through general medical care, the report said.

Twenty-five per cent to 40 per cent of people in general hospital beds at any time are treated for complications of alcoholism, and total economic costs were estimated at \$85.8 billion in 1988, it said.

"Just in those two commonly abused products...reside an opportunity for enormous savings in our health care system, not to mention the potential for improved quality of life for those individuals abusing the substances," Dr. Johnson said.

and it contains the latest data available, Dr. Johnson said.

Though it compares figures from several different years, the composite picture gives proportions that probably hold true today, he said.

The report said illicit drug abuse cost \$2.1 billion in direct health-care services in 1985, and \$58.3 billion in total costs in 1988, including lost productivity and crime fighting expenses.

Violent injuries added \$5.3 billion in direct medical costs to U.S. health-care expenditures in 1985, and lifetime total costs of \$4.5 billion for injuries that year, the report said.

Diseases related to obesity — a condition plaguing 34 million Americans — and high-fat, low fiber diets are an extremely costly problem, the report said. But it did not estimate a price.

SOLUTIONS

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- Fifty.
- Cinderella.
- Charles Dickens.
- a) The study of soil.
- Fireworks.

PUZZLES

- (A) 1. Because one word leads to another.
2. The letter "A" because it makes her hear.
3. Because it brings even the proudest man to his sneeze.
4. Time to have the clock repaired.
5. An embarrassed zebra (not a newspaper, that's 'read' all over).
6. The letter "M".
7. Courtship.

House defeats segregation bill

(Continued from page 1)

cused Deputy Abdul Baqi Jammo, who did not support the bill, of compromising his principles. But an angry Jammo fought back saying he was "not the one who voted in favour of usury," a reference to the positive vote some Brotherhood deputies gave on the 1993 fiscal budget.

The House voted on the segregation bill after Mr. Nabulsi, a member of the Judiciary Committee, read a statement in which he said there was no clear Islamic ruling against co-education.

He cited sayings by the Prophet Muhammad to prove that Islam does not call for sex segregation at public places and argued for giving people the choice to decide on whether they want to send their children to segregated or co-education schools.

"There are also members of society whose culture allows for co-education," said Mr. Nabulsi, pointing out that "universities, the streets and the work place."

Brotherhood deputies kept interrupting Mr. Nabulsi while he was speaking and he completely stopped talking for three times as shouts against his speech came from different corners of the domed Parliament building.

Independent Islamist Ali Al Fagir said that Islam explicitly calls for the segregation of sexes, adding that "we were not asked when sexes were allowed to mix at universities and offices."

The government tried to justify the presence of co-education schools in the Kingdom but did

not defend the principle.

Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouran Al Hindawi said that government schools were "usually segregated" and co-education is used in these schools only in remote areas where there is not sufficient number of students to open separate schools for boys and girls.

In what one observer called an apologetic attitude, Mr. Hindawi said banning co-education will deny many citizens the constitutional right to basic education because the government will not be able to build segregated schools in areas where there are only 10 or 20 male and female students.

Moreover, he said, 72 per cent of students at the country's 243 co-education schools are below grade four.

"I have reports that many students who attend co-education schools abide by values and traditions more than students who don't," Mr. Hindawi said.

Mr. Fagir challenged this assertion. "What the minister (Mr. Hindawi) said is incorrect," said Mr. Fagir, a former minister of Awqaf and Islamic affairs.

The defeat of the school segregation bill represented the first failure of the Islamists to amend draft laws to Islamic law in the current session of the House.

They have succeeded in amending the draft youth law to segregate sexes at swimming pools and sports clubs, in banning investments of the civil defence martyrs fund assets in usury and forcing Royal Jordanian airlines not to serve alcohol aboard flights to and from Muslim countries.

Extraordinary session planned

(Continued from page 1)

isolation — most probably the labour law and the illegal acquisition of wealth law — and to fulfill its pledge to raise salaries of public employees.

"The extraordinary session will be called soon and it will be short to allow the next government, which will be a temporary one to prepare and oversee this year's national elections, ample time for its task," one of the sources said.

A Cabinet reshuffle which was expected immediately after the Holy Month of Ramadan, would

therefore be delayed until the end of the extraordinary session, the sources predicted.

Most pressing among the duties of the Lower House during the extraordinary session will be introducing an estimated JD 70 million budget annex which will bring around 450,000 public sector employees and retirees roughly JD 15 increase on their monthly salaries. The Financial Committee of the Lower House had demanded a JD 20 increase but the government at that time pledged itself only to a "substantial" increase.

U.S. issues invitations to bilaterals

(Continued from page 1)

facilitate the discussions, we think the parties realize this is an unusual opportunity for them, and frankly I think they will end up accepting the invitations."

He did not explain what the United States might do to help arrange a settlement. He recalled former President Jimmy Carter's role in summoning the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to his Camp David retreat in 1978 and bridging differences between them.

But Mr. Christopher said there were no precise antecedents in history for the current situation. Mr. Christopher was expected to testify on the peace talks later Wednesday before an appropriations subcommittee of the House of Representatives.

The Palestinians have objected to Israel's proposals for limited self-rule on the West Bank and in Gaza and, more recently, to terms reached by the United States and Israel for repatriation of Palestinian expellees.

Mr. Christopher said Tuesday that U.S. talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would not be resumed. He told reporters the PLO had failed "to

assist us on terrorist matters."

Israel Wednesday accepted the invitation to the peace talks.

"We were very happy to receive the letter," foreign ministry spokesman Rafi Gamzu said.

He said Israel had formally accepted.

The talks are to resume April 20, Mr. Gamzu said.

The invitation to Israel was delivered to Yossi Beilin, the deputy foreign minister, by U.S. Ambassador William Harrop and Russian Ambassador Alexander Dovin.

Israel's foreign minister, Shimon Peres, is currently on a trip to Europe.

U.S. Ambassador to Israel William Harrop said the United States expected the Palestinians to attend the talks in any event.

"We believe they will come... we expect to see them in Washington in April. We have reason to be confident they'll be there," Mr. Harrop told reporters.

There was no immediate comment from the other participants in the talks, Syria and Lebanon, on their plans.

But in Damascus, government-run newspapers were downbeat about the peace process.

Jordan awaits Arab talks

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Kaddoumi said in his talks with Mr. Sharaa he had underlined the need for Israel to comply with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 and return all the evictees to their homes.

"There should be a comprehensive solution to the deportees problem; that is to say, the immediate enforcement of the U.N. resolution," Mr. Kaddoumi said.

He said the Arab parties to the talks, including the PLO, are conducting bilateral consultations among themselves to determine the date and venue of a meeting in which they will all participate.

Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

"I believe that Israel must make it clear that there must be no deportations in the future," he told a news conference.

"The principle is the most important thing," Mr. Hussein said. "Procedures can be discussed and can lead to agreements. We are ready to talk about everything if the principle has been agreed."

He said that the Palestinian delegation wanted Israel to implement Security Council Resolution 799 — demanding the immediate return of the exiles — in full.

But he said the Palestinians would take into account Israeli "problems of security or logistic problems about how to bring back the people."

The United States and Israel worked out a staged return of exiles under which 101 of them would be allowed back immediately and the rest by the end of this year at the latest.

But Palestinian leaders have not accepted this formula.

Mr. Hussein said he believed the peace talks would resume on April 20 "if there is a will from the Israeli side."

He rejected suggestions the talks might continue without Palestinian participation if Arab states agreed to go to Washington without them.

"I don't believe we are risking being out of the negotiations," Mr. Hussein said. "We are the main element and without us I doubt there will be any sort of talks."

Mr. Hussein also appealed to the United States to resume a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which unofficially advises the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, citing Britain's decision to resume ministerial contacts on Tuesday.

Second suspect

(Continued from page 1)

damentalist, said the suspect had lost his passport in 1988 shortly after arriving in the United States to find work.

"Maybe somebody stole it and is using it," he said. The passport had been reissued after inquiries by American and Jordanian authorities, he said.

"The whole thing does not make sense," said his father. "It has been concocted by the Mossad and the Zionist lobby to divert world sympathy from the deportees by linking them to terrorism," he said, referring to hundreds of Palestinians expelled by Israel.

"Of course they found in Mohammad three key specifications — he is bearded, regularly attends the mosque and is a Palestinian. It is a well-studied game."

Rabin: Camp David-style summit possible

(Continued from page 1)

but would provide no timetable. Rabin was careful to keep his own counsel and not foreclose any options. He would only say that he is "open for discussions" on anything Clinton wants to discuss.

Rabin has repeatedly said in the past that without prior U.S.-Israel coordination the peace talks will not succeed.

Rabin refused to say how he planned to coordinate with the U.S. He did say he is carrying "no blueprint solutions, no maps," that would envisage any withdrawal from the Golan Heights in return for normalised ties with Syria.

He insisted that Israel's position on the Golan has not changed, but pointedly refused to repeat his old formula. "Our position was as it is. We accept (Security Council) resolutions 242 and 338 as applicable to the achievement of peace treaty between Syria and Israel. The

meaning is withdrawal of the Israeli armed forces from the Golan Heights to secure and recognised boundaries which will be defined once we know what we can get in return."

Asked if he did not mean "from the Golan," he replied, "I've said what I've said."

Asked if he would raise the idea of obtaining U.S. security assurances in return for withdrawal, Rabin would only say, "The purpose of the visit... is first and foremost to create a better understanding, to see the options."

Rabin indicated he is opposed to the idea of Israel proposing a defence treaty with the U.S. as part of a peace package.

He said he is proud that U.S. soldiers do not have to protect Israelis, and said he preferred U.S. hardware to U.S. troops. He suggested that he reached an agreement with former President George Bush on prepositioning U.S. military equipment in Israel, but gave no details.

Israelis chase and kill school boy

(Continued from page 1)

showed a reporter a hole where a bullet struck a nearby wall about one metre above the ground.

Haji, who attended a boarding school in Beit Hanina, was buried in his home village of Burka near the West Bank town of Nablus later Wednesday. About 1,000 people accompanied the coffin draped with a Palestinian flag.

Soldiers opened fire to break up the funeral march, but there were no reports of injuries, Arab reporters said.

In Jerusalem, Arab merchants closed their shop to protest the

killing which brought to 1,049 the number of Palestinians slain by Israelis since the 1987 start of the uprising against Israeli occupation.

Also Wednesday, unknown assailants fired at a Jewish settler bus in the occupied Gaza Strip and passengers returned fire, the army said. No one was hurt in the shooting, but the bus driver was slightly injured by stones, the army said.

The army said a note claiming responsibility by the Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas was left at the scene along with discarded ammunition.

'Throwing' a party

By Saad Hattar

A JOKE from the "iron curtain" days goes: "What is the difference between a party in the Soviet Union and elsewhere? ... Answer: People elsewhere go out looking for a party, whereas in the Soviet Union the 'Party' is out looking for you."

In Jordan today the prevailing trend is "let's party." The multitude of political parties springing up in the country now offers Jordanians an ample choice to indulge in political life, a practice until two months ago considered taboo.

The nearly four-decade old hide-and-seek, sometimes cat-and-mouse, game between the authorities and the underground parties has ended with the enactment in September of a law legalising political pluralism.

And the new era has ushered in tens of parties, spanning the political spectrum from left to ultra-right, each carrying a different ideology and school of thought, indigenous and alien.

But this newly acquired political pluralism has also created a chaotic climate against a backdrop of political uncertainty.

So far 15 parties have obtained official recognition by the government, and the number is expected to rise as many others scramble to recruit the minimum 50 founding members required by law to "throw" a party.

A moment's look at some segments of the Arab World's history shows that in the fifties, the fad was towards pan-Arabism; the sixties saw the rise of anti-Israeli sentiments and a tendency towards martyrdom in defence of Arab soil and dignity. In the

seventies and eighties it was oil and consumerism that predominated. The Arab masses' dream of unity and future prosperity was all but erased at the outset of the nineties which saw the "finale" of Arab brethren theatre.

Today, the vogue is political pluralism.

But a glimpse at the political parties' map provides a bleak picture in the absence of group planning and sound organisational patterns.

Parties on the left are fragmented, fragile and incoherent. The centrists run their affairs as if they were share-holding companies.

Even the deep-rooted Islamic Action Front, the most organised of all, is plagued by division.

So where is all this going to lead us? It seems we are destined to witness dozens of political parties in a country of about four million people. And the game could go into overtime with no clear winner.

Parties should uphold the interests of the country and the well-being of citizens rather than the narrow, personal interests of fellow members only.

After all, well-established democracies are known to be built on two or three parties at most, which rotatably vie for the helm of the nation.

It is high time Jordanians unified their ranks and joined strong, publicly accepted, self-generating parties that can survive and provide.

The writer is a Jordanian journalist who contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

U.N.: Iraq not answering

(Continued from page 1)

sure that it will not engage in such activities in the future.

Mr. Perricos said the Iraqis' reluctance to disclose details of their former supply network was part of their non-compliance.

Asked what he would say to the Iraqi official in charge of ensuring full compliance, Mr. Perricos said: "Full transparency is the only way leading to full compliance; lack of transparency can only be at your disadvantage."

In Bahrain, site of the regional field office for the U.N. special commission, another team was preparing to go in on Thursday morning just as Mr. Perricos' team was due to come out.

The team leader, American chemical and biological weapons expert Dave Franz, said 19 experts from about six countries were expected to fly to pursue inspections of Iraqi facilities.

The formation of the committees and the joint command was agreed upon in five rounds of talks since December between Hamas and Fatah.

In an interview, Mr. Nazzari said further meetings to appoint members of the commissions were planned, but would not say where or when these will be held.

It also was not clear how many people each of the committees would include.

Mr. Nazzari said the most recent meetings last Saturday and Monday were "positive." In addition to himself, these were attended by Hamas' spokesman Ibrahim Goshe and Fatah representative Abbas Zaki.

He said that both groups were

Fateh, Hamas form joint command for Palestinian uprising

AMMAN (AP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) mainstream Fatah group and the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas have agreed to form a joint command to direct the uprising against Israel and a committee to end a bloody rift between them, a senior Hamas official said Wednesday.

Mohammad Nazzari, Hamas' representative in Jordan, said two other joint committees, one to coordinate efforts on behalf of Palestinian expellees and another to maintain consultations between the two groups on other issues related to the Palestinian question also will be formed.

The formation of the committees and the joint command was agreed upon in five rounds of talks since December between Hamas and Fatah.

In an interview, Mr. Nazzari said further meetings to appoint members of the commissions were planned, but would not say where or when these will be held.

It also was not clear how many people each of the committees would include.

Mr. Nazzari said the most recent meetings last Saturday and Monday were "positive." In addition to himself, these were attended by Hamas' spokesman Ibrahim Goshe and Fatah representative Abbas Zaki.

He said that both groups were

working hard to "remove the present tension."

Several attempts over the past year have failed to end the conflict between the two factions.

Key differences remain over Palestinian participation in the U.S.-arranged Middle East peace process, which Hamas has vehemently opposed.

Hamas, acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement, was formed after the start of the Palestinian uprising in 1987. It has since become the PLO's main rival for influence in the occupied territories.


Hamas gained prominence in December after Israel expelled over 400 suspected fundamentalists to Lebanon.

Lebanon has refused to accept the exiles, who remain stranded in a tent-camp between an Israeli-occupied strip in southeast Lebanon and the Lebanese army's forward-most positions.

Earlier this month, Hamas launched a diplomatic offensive to secure a wider role in Middle East politics. Mr. Nazzari and Mr. Goshe met in Amman twice with a U.S. diplomat to explain their viewpoints.

They also met with the Jordan-based ambassadors of Britain, France, Italy and Germany.

Hamas representatives in Khartoum, Sudan, conferred with Spanish and Chinese diplomats.



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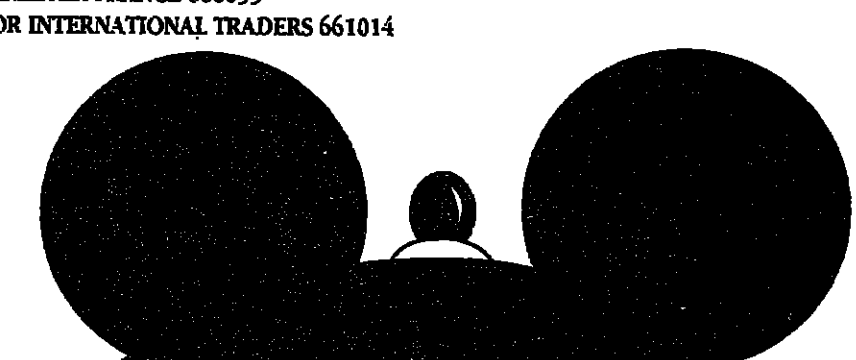
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World Youth Soccer Championship

Titleholders Portugal crash out; Brazil, England, U.S. set to advance

SYDNEY (AP) — Two time champion Brazil, England and the United States need only to draw their final first round matches Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals of soccer's World Youth Championships.

The final seven qualifiers in the under 20 tournament will be decided Thursday, when all 16 teams play their final first round matches.

Brazil faces Norway in Adelaide Thursday needing only one point to be assured of advancing from Group D.

England also needs only a share of the points when it faces Turkey in Group C in Melbourne to be certain of clinching a spot in the last eight.

Australia, which has clinched a spot from Group A, is the only team so far to have secured a quarterfinal berth. Defending champion Portugal and Cameroon have been eliminated from quarterfinal contention.

In Group A, the winner of Thursday's Colombia-Russia contest will advance. Russia will progress if the Sydney match is a draw.

Germany and Uruguay, each with three points, and African champion Ghana, which has two points, are contesting the two



Portuguese player Hugo Portiro (centre) prepares to kick the ball as he is surrounded by three Uruguayan players. Portugal was defeated 2-1 (AFP photo)

spots from Brisbane-based Group B.

Germany will play Uruguay on Thursday, with Ghana playing Portugal.

Brazil will advance unless it loses by three goals or more against winless Norway in group D in Adelaide. Norway needs a big victory over Brazil to progress, while the winner of Saudi Arabia and Mexico will progress. If those teams draw, Mexico has the better goal difference.

England would need to lose by

four goals against Turkey to be deprived of a quarterfinal place from Group C in Melbourne, while the United States will progress as long as it gets at least a tie against South Korea.

"Everything is possible in soccer but the odds are against us," said Turkish assistant coach Yalman Mijdat.

Germany will be without three key players when it faces Uruguay in Brisbane. Striker Carsten Jancker and defender Max Ederl both have

been suspended after receiving two yellow card cautions, while midfielder Guido Jorres is sidelined with a broken ankle.

Brazilian coach Julio Leal was confident Wednesday after his team's bruising 2-1 victory over Mexico Tuesday — a match that ended with rival players jostling each other in the tunnel to the locker rooms.

"We got the feeling of our way to play. Now we must see if we can play it for 90 minutes next time," Leal said.

American coach Bobby Howe said his team would go flat out for victory over South Korea rather than playing safe for a draw.

"They wouldn't know how. They are too unsophisticated," Howe said. "They will play their own flowing game and that's probably the best way, because attack is the best form of defense."

Saudi Arabia faces an uphill battle against Mexico.

The Saudis will be without striker Fahad Al Ghesheyan and midfielder Mohammad Al Jahani, both of whom had been suspended.

The tournament continues through March 20, with quarterfinals scheduled for Saturday and Sunday.



Current chess champion Gary Kasparov (left) takes down a move as he is watched by predecessor Anatoly Karpov during their match at the Linares chess tournament (AFP photo)

Kasparov defeats Karpov in Linares grudge match

LINARES (R) — World champion Garry Kasparov crushed his old rival, former world champion Anatoly Karpov, in a 10th-round grudge match at the Linares Grandmaster chess tournament Tuesday.

Kasparov defeated his fellow Russian after 27 moves and three and a half hours' play to lead the tournament with seven and a half points from 10 games and just three rounds remaining.

Everyone expected the clash between Kasparov and Karpov, who have contested five matches for the World Championship and

faced each other in more than 150 games, to be the decisive one.

Having overcome his biggest obstacle and taken a lead of a full point, Kasparov looks firm favourite to win the tournament. The game lived up to expectations. The two old foes, whose personal animosity is well known, made frequent eye contact as they slugged it out, playing their most combative chess in an attempt to destroy each other.

"Karpov was humiliated. Gary just annihilated him," said British master Malcolm Pein.

Table Tennis Federation cracks down on solvents

LONDON (AP) — Table tennis officials are cracking down on the use of glue and other solvents which can improve the performance of rackets.

The executive committee of the International Table Tennis Federation announced measures Tuesday aimed at preventing the use of illegal substances at the May 11-23 World Championships in Goteborg, Sweden.

The ITTF said players may not use rackets which contain any aromatic or chlorinated solvents,

only rubber adhesive will be permitted.

Rackets will be tested at random during the early rounds of the World Championships. Rackets of all players will be tested during the late rounds.

Albert Shipley, the ITTF's administrative director, said the federation had developed a special device to test rackets for illegal solvents.

He said some players have been using rubber glue on their rackets to produce a "much faster catapult effect."

Courier era taking shape

INDIAN WELLS California (R) — The Jim Courier era in men's tennis is taking shape.

The 22-year-old American has learned how to be ranked number one in the world, and it shows nearly every time he walks onto the tennis court these days.

Courier's lead over the rest of rivals is at its highest point and his confidence level is even higher.

Courier won his third title in four tournaments this year at the \$1.4 million Champions Cup in Indian Wells, California, last weekend. His victory raised his match record to an impressive 17-1 — his best start ever — and increased his lead over his compatriot second-ranked Pete Sampras to 675 points on the ATP rankings.

Courier will be the top seed at the \$1.4 million Lipton Cham-

pionships beginning Friday in Key Biscayne, Florida.

The red-headed Floridian though is not concerned with his impressive numbers.

"I don't worry about the ranking," said Courier, who will be bidding for a third consecutive French Open on the Roland Garros clay courts in Paris starting in May. "I'm pleased that I've won three tournaments, but the most important thing is that I'm playing well and trying to improve."

The long, hard road to gain the number one ranking in the world, the fight to keep it and the process of marketing himself took their toll on Courier last year. He admittedly lost some steam at the end of the last year, due to an overbooked schedule and Davis Cup matches.

This year, Courier has opted

not to play Davis Cup for the defending champion U.S. team in the first round later this month in Australia. He has not yet decided on the later rounds. He has also dropped some tournaments from his schedule, notably last month's tour stop in San Francisco where he took over the number one ranking in 1992.

"I was spread a little too thin last year, and I learned my lesson," said Courier, who lost the top ranking briefly last fall. "I didn't play San Francisco this year because it was too close to the Australian Open."

Courier also feels like he is competing more against himself than his challengers now that he has been number one for 56 weeks. "I just want to be the best player I can be, that's what I'm competing against," Courier said. "My serve and my forehand are my biggest shots, but my mental toughness is my biggest strength. If that's in order, the guy on the other side of the net becomes faceless."

Wayne Ferreira of South Africa, who was nearly blown off the court by Courier in Sunday's final, spoke for most of Courier's 1993 opponents when he said: "We as players know why he's ranked number one and he deserves to be there. He really comes through in the big matches. He's really tough both mentally and physically."



Russian figure skating couple Maja Ussova and Alexander Schulin (AFP photo)

Milan withdraws bid for 2000 Olympics

MILAN (R) — The city of Milan, swept up in a political corruption storm shaking Italy, has decided to withdraw its bid to stage the 2000 Olympic Games.

The Corriere Della Sera said in an unsourced report that the Milan 2000 Committee, which was organising the bid, took the decision at a meeting late Tuesday.

Milan's withdrawal would leave the International Olympic Committee (IOC) with six candidates — Sydney, Peking, Istanbul, Brasilia, Berlin and Britain's Manchester.

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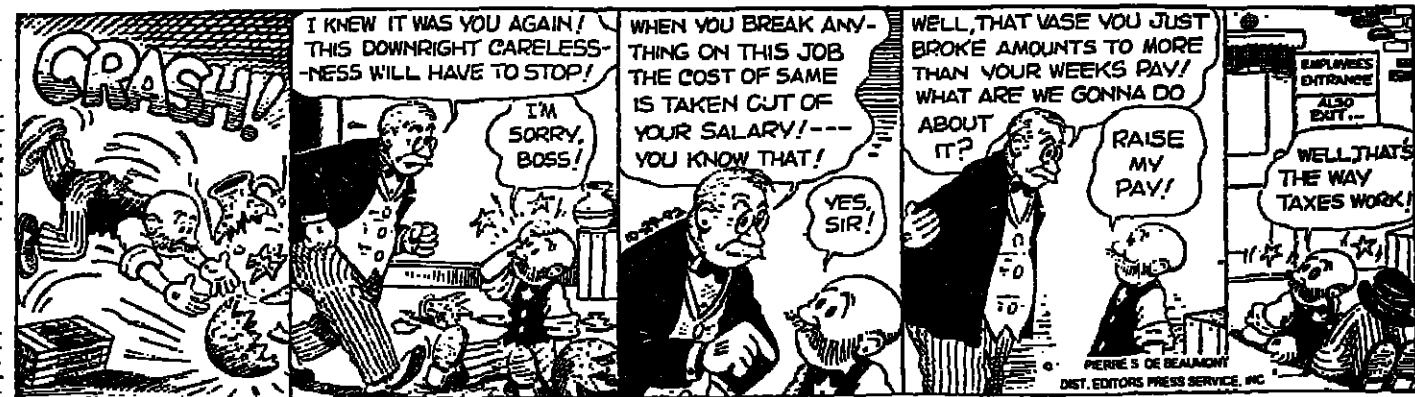
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY MARCH 12, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Look into whatever you do not understand and search out the truth of any situation even if you have to ferret out facts that you yourself don't want to focus on clearly at this time.

associate but if you are not tactful and without sarcastic comments you can lose one who is very good for your life.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A fellow associate gives you a real pain in the neck and you want to tell that person off in no uncertain terms but it would profit you nil today.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are determined to have a good time and can't seem to get going easily in such a direction so relax and enjoy whatever comes along without making waves.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A real ruckus can take place at your home unless you realize it is the planets testing your patience and selfcontrol and laugh off problems.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) Recklessness driving or in any other way in motor or could quickly bring accident or other costly trouble so set a moderate pace.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) You are sorely tempted to spend more than you can afford or to commit yourself to some obligations of a practical nature that would be most unwise.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) You are discontented and disgruntled and want to take it out on whoever is nearest to you but you would be doing an injustice, need to harmonize your own thoughts.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Make sure that you do not feel closed in today by circumstances beyond your control and keep poised and calm; while tonight brings you relaxation.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You feel acquaintances are letting you down when actually they are so preoccupied with their own troubles, they can't take on yours too now.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You certainly would be wise to be most careful to do nothing that could in anyway affect your standing in your community, although appearance can downgrade you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You feel pressured to get off to new scenes and new acquaintances but it is exactly what you should not do or trouble ensues.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your hunches and intuitions are off of which now but you are not apt to realize it and to push just the wrong interests and lose out where it counts the most.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are very critical of an

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"Did you see my ad in the Personals? 'Lonely wife seeks talkative man for mealtime conversation!'"

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY MARCH 12, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You are under unusually good aspects to go to those with whom you have any sort of contact to let them know just exactly what it is that you expect of them. Communicating at this time will be a two way affair.

family worked out to your satisfaction early but then avoid a tempting offer to upset basic conditions while later back an ally.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Show your best abilities to an outsider you want in your project and don't let a home condition keep you from public interest, tonight visit a close companion.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Put more spark into your usual duties which should be easy now, then put aside messages until a better moment while later money matters improve.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A fine day for enjoying yourself in the morning during spare hours as you wish, avoid a financial commitment soon after, then make new outlets, associates tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) There is some muddled thinking your mind today so depend more upon the views, suggestions of your family today; and intimate advisors tonight.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) You can be productive in your outside interests during the morning, then don't be drawn into a secret situation but tonight be with good friends.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) Stick to practical and money matters in the morning for best results, don't listen to a depressive advisor right after and tonight meet with a bigwig.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Project your own attractiveness to get best results early, then make sure you do nothing to upset a bigwig and tonight go after new long term goals.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Now one who is an experienced advisor with your charm after which avoid a new project and tonight get together with your long time attachment.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Meet a new admirer of one different views to your own and don't get involved in a shady business matter but later join close associates in discussions.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Add touches to your surroundings that make your work easier and avoid going off with an insistent ally but tonight do what improves your health.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Concentrate today on having a good time and make engagements for all such and do no more dreary tasks than necessary while tonight enjoy home pleasures.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You can get your home or

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
BY TAMARA HIRSCH
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A NO-GUESS SITUATION

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ K J 7
♥ Q 10
♦ A J 7 3 2
♣ K 10 5

EAST
♠ A 8 5 3
♥ 6 4
♦ K
♣ 9 7 6 4 2

SOUTH
♠ A K J 8 5 3
♥ 6 4
♦ A Q J

The bidding:
South West North East
1♥ Pass 2♦ Pass
3♥ Pass 4NT Pass
5♥ Pass 6♥ Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠
To put yourself in the same predicament as South, declarer at six hearts, cover the East-West cards with your thumbs and read on.

Wasted values in the black suits have propelled your side to a sub-par heart slam. Certainly, it is hard to fault the auction. To make matters worse, West's opening diamond lead has struck your weak spot.

What card do you play to the first trick?

We have seen players duck this trick and hope for a diamond continuation, then try to set up a long diamond for a spade discard. This does not seem like the hand for such duplicity, so you should rise with the ace of diamonds.

The wisdom of your decision strikes home immediately when East drops the king. If this card is honest (and why shouldn't it be?), your chances of getting home have improved slightly. You draw trumps in two rounds, ending in hand, and lead a low spade. East follows low. Do you play the jack or the king, and why?

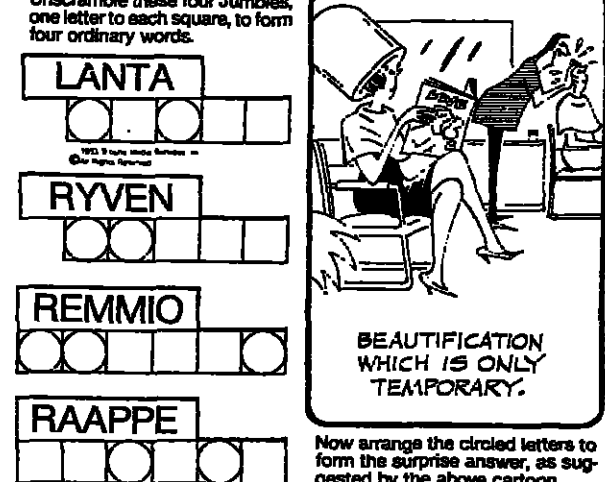
If you think that it's a straight guess, you've overlooked the obvious. Your only hope is to insert the jack!

If West has the ace of spades, wouldn't the defender have risen with that card and cashed the queen of diamonds to beat the slam? Therefore, East must have the ace, so your one chance is that the queen is with West.

The gods are smiling on you. When East wins the ace of spades and cannot lead a second diamond, you get to discard your diamond loser on the king of spades. Just another routine slam.

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

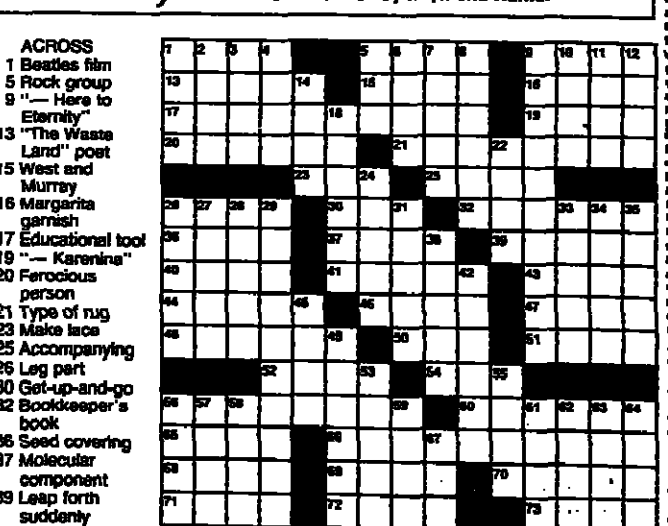
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: FORAY HOVEL WOBBLE SURETY
Answer: What the moth hoped to see when he ate a hole in the rug—THE FLOOR SHOW

THE Daily Crossword by Raymond Hamel



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solvers:

1 Across	2 Across	3 Across	4 Across
5 Across	6 Across	7 Across	8 Across
9 Across	10 Across	11 Across	12 Across
13 Across	14 Across	15 Across	16 Across
17 Across	18 Across	19 Across	20 Across
21 Across	22 Across	23 Across	24 Across
25 Across	26 Across	27 Across	28 Across
29 Across	30 Across	31 Across	32 Across
33 Across	34 Across	35 Across	36 Across
37 Across	38 Across	39 Across	40 Across
41 Across	42 Across	43 Across	44 Across
45 Across	46 Across	47 Across	48 Across
49 Across	50 Across	51 Across	52 Across
53 Across	54 Across	55 Across	56 Across
57 Across	58 Across	59 Across	60 Across
61 Across	62 Across	63 Across	64 Across
65 Across	66 Across	67 Across	68 Across
69 Across	70 Across	71 Across	72 Across
73 Across	74 Across	75 Across	76 Across
77 Across	78 Across	79 Across	80 Across
81 Across	82 Across	83 Across	84 Across
85 Across	86 Across	87 Across	88 Across
89 Across	90 Across	91 Across	92 Across
93 Across	94 Across	95 Across	96 Across
97 Across	98 Across	99 Across	100 Across

Serb forces advance in Bosnia

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Bosnian Serb forces backed by artillery reportedly closed in Wednesday on two more towns in eastern Bosnia, and a U.N. aid convoy was blocked for a second day.

Also Wednesday, six U.S. Air Force cargo planes dropped 42 tonnes of food and medical supplies over Srebrenica, the 11th mission of the American relief effort.

The Serbs were taking aim at two towns — Srebrenica and Konjevic Polje.

The last Muslim defence position outside Srebrenica fell to advancing Serbs who were within five kilometres of the town, said local Bosnian army spokesman Ibrahim Dedicovic, reached by ham radio Wednesday from Zagreb, Croatia.

A Bosnian Serb military statement issued Tuesday said Serb forces seized two strategic hills about nine kilometres (six miles) north of Srebrenica.

A U.N. convoy headed to the Konjevic Polje area near Srebrenica to evacuate up to 75 sick and wounded Muslims was blocked for a second day by local Serb commanders at Zvornik on the Serbian border, said Tony Land, the representative in Sarajevo of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

He said the main dispute with the Serbs focused on who could be evacuated. The Serb commander insisted soldiers could not be included, but Mr. Land said that would exclude males age 10 to 60, a "large proportion" of the seriously wounded.

U.N. land convoys to eastern Bosnia have been repeatedly turned back by ethnic Serb forces, prompting the United States to start dropping aid from the air last week.

U.N. refugee officials were negotiating with Serbs to secure passage for the trucks and an aid convoy Thursday to Srebrenica, where a World Health Organisation doctor reported 97 people were close to death.

Muslims were trapped in Konjevic Polje after Serbs routed them last week from nearby Cerska.

Sadik Hajdarevic, a defence official reached Wednesday by ham radio in Konjevic Polje, said the town was under heavy artillery attack and that more than 100 people were killed.

The report, like most from the region, could not be independently confirmed.

Mr. Hajdarevic said Serb troops had advanced to within five kilometres of the town. He said they were also only 500 metres from the road south from Zvornik, the main corridor for U.N. relief convoys to the eastern region and for refugees fleeing the area.

Serb forces apparently wanted control of the road to link Serbia and the Bosnian Serb headquarters of Pale, just east of Sarajevo, Mr. Hajdarevic said.

He said the local Bosnian military had estimated that 20,000 Serb troops were involved in the offensive, but there was no confirmation of that from the Serb side.

More than 130,000 people are reported dead or missing in nearly a year of fighting since ethnic Serbs rebelled against Muslim and Croat plans to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. Bosnian Serbs have seized 70 per cent of the republic.

In New York, U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance said Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic had been invited to Paris Thursday to

meet with him, EC envoy Lord Owen and French President Francois Mitterrand.

It was not yet known whether Mr. Milosevic would attend. He is seen by many as a main instigator of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On Tuesday, a French peacekeeper was injured when two cars filled with "well dressed men" drove past and fired pistol shots at a U.N. logistics convoy at Mali Zvornik on the Serbian side of the border with Bosnia, a U.N. spokeswoman said.

The soldier was hit in the leg and taken to hospital but was likely to be discharged later Wednesday, the source said.

Meanwhile, the fate of Bosnia may be decided in Sarajevo Wednesday when the former Yugoslav republic's collective presidency meets to debate whether to sign a peace plan to end the bloody 11-month civil war.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic is emerging as a supporter of the plan, which was devised by international mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

"I can't be neutral, I'm in favour of peace," the president told reporters in Sarajevo earlier this week.

Mr. Izetbegovic will be striving Wednesday to build consensus for the plan among colleagues on the 10-member Bosnian presidency. Senior government, military and party officials are also expected to take part in the discussions.

Opposition to the plan, which is strongest among elements of the Bosnian army, could cement around Vice-President Ejup Ganic at the meeting.

Mr. Ganic argues the mediators' proposals reward re-

bel Serb aggression and contain only vague international guarantees for the continued sovereignty and integrity of the Bosnian state.

"Vance and Owen are trying to convert this conflict from an external aggression to an internal dispute," the vice-president said Tuesday.

United Nations resolutions have identified Serb forces — Bosnian Serbs and their political and military supporters in neighbouring Serbia — as the aggressors in the Bosnian conflict.

But the peace plan gives rebel Serb forces control over three of the 10 new provinces and a full say in any future government.

Even opponents of the Vance-Owen plan admit the Bosnian army is desperately short of the ammunition it needs to continue fighting.

Russia Tuesday stepped up pressure on Bosnia's warring parties to accept an international peace plan.

"The sides in the conflict are faced with a choice — approve the basic elements of this plan or take responsibility for further bloodshed," President Boris Yeltsin declared in a terse statement.

The Russian president issued his statement, his first devoted solely to the Yugoslav conflict, as Bosnia's Muslim-led government and the Bosnian Serbs considered their response to the peace plan.

"The current round of talks in New York confirmed the absence of a real alternative to the Vance-Owen plan as the basis for a settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina," Mr. Yeltsin said in his statement, issued by his press service.

"And the appropriate conclusions should be made by the U.N. Security Council," it said.



United Nations troops watch over the exchange of 57 Serbian prisoners for 64 Bosnians at Sarajevo Airport Tuesday (AFP photo)

Relief plane shot at in Angola

CUBAN, Angola (R) — UNITA rebels shot at a U.N. plane carrying food and medical aid to Cubal in western Angola as it tried to land, a Reuters reporter on the plane said.

No one was hurt in the shooting Tuesday but the Russian-made cargo plane, clearly identified with a World Food Programme logo on the side, returned to Luanda without delivering its cargo of humanitarian aid.

Cubal lies 150 kilometres west of the central city of Huambo, which fell to UNITA at the weekend after two months of heavy fighting.

Government troops on the way to Huambo had passed through Cubal, which the government claims it retook from UNITA in January.

Rebel leader Jonas Savimbi issued a call to arms to his supporters Tuesday following government warnings that Angola was slipping back into all-out civil war.

In a tough speech spelling out his terms for a resumption of peace talks with the government, Mr. Savimbi ordered his fighters back to the bush saying UNITA would reorganise disbanded units

to continue the fight against the government.

President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, meanwhile, urged the international community to lift an arms embargo to enable his hard-pressed forces to fight back.

"I am launching a general appeal to all UNITA armed forces... to gather together in their old areas. We have uniforms, arms, ammunition, bombs, and food," Mr. Savimbi said in an hour-long address to the nation on UNITA's Vorgan Voice of Resistance of the Black Cockerel radio.

"We will immediately order the reorganisation of your units in order to continue with the battles for the sake of bringing dignity to the Bantu people in their land of origin. Come quickly. I know that you will trust my word."

Mr. Savimbi, whose movement recaptured the crucial city of Huambo at the weekend after a 55-day battle, demanded a change of venue and the replacement of the U.N. mediator as the price of his participation in further peace talks with the government.

"We do not want talks to be held in Addis Ababa anymore."

We shall only attend the talks if they are held in Geneva," he said in remarks monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

A UNITA delegation would leave Angola on March 13 to European and African capitals to outline UNITA's plans for negotiations, he added. Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Morocco should play an important role in the process, he said.

"We are prepared to negotiate with the (ruling) MPLA and with other political parties," Mr. Savimbi said. Angola should establish a provisional government of national unity — which would include representatives from both parties, he added.

UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) failed to turn up for peace talks in Addis Ababa 10 days ago.

Margaret Anstee, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's representative in Angola, organised the talks but Mr. Savimbi said he would not negotiate while she was still involved.

"As long as she is here, there will be no negotiations, because she has no experience in African affairs. She should leave," he added.

Clinton, Mitterrand say Russia needs quick aid

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton has said he will try to mobilise swift Western help for Russia in an effort to keep its endangered political and economic reforms on track. He said the crisis can not wait until a seven nation summit in July.

Adding his support for a proposed emergency meeting of the Group of Seven major industrialised nations, Mr. Clinton Tuesday said it was "important for us to try to move aggressively to give the Russians the means to restore some economic growth and opportunity and preserve political liberty."

French President Francois Mitterrand, joining Mr. Clinton at a press conference after an introductory meeting, voiced his own support for an emergency G-7 summit.

"There are problems, specifically in Eastern Europe and in Russia, that are urgent," Mr. Mitterrand said.

Former President Nixon, who met Monday evening with Mr. Clinton to discuss Russia, met separately Tuesday with Republican and Democratic senators to urge more U.S. aid to Russia and other states of the former Soviet Union. Congressional sources said Mr. Nixon made the trip to Capitol Hill because Mr. Clinton asked him to make a special appeal to GOP senators.

In a brief corridor interview, Mr. Nixon said he believed U.S. aid can decide "whether political and economic freedom survive" in Russia and the other former Soviet republics.

The idea of an early G-7 summit has drawn opposition from Tokyo, host for the next scheduled annual meeting of the United States, Canada, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Tokyo does not want anything to steal the thunder from its July summit, and it also has a long-standing territorial dispute with Russia over four islands.

"The important point I'd like to make is I don't believe we can wait until July for the major countries of the world who care about what happens in Russia and who would like very much to keep political and economic reform on track there, to move," Mr. Clinton said.

Still, Mr. Clinton left open the possibility that aid for Russia could be dealt with at a lower level, such as finance or foreign ministers. G-7 finance ministers and central bank presidents are to meet in Washington in late April, and Russia's struggle is expected to be at the top of their agenda.

White House Communications Director George Stephanopoulos said a heads-of-state meeting was possible but was not the only way the issue could be dealt with.

Mr. Mitterrand will visit Moscow this month for talks with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Suharto re-elected president

JAKARTA (R) — President Suharto, Indonesia's iron ruler of the past 27 years, was reelected Wednesday for a fresh five-year term and immediately chose the recently retired military chief as vice-president. Mr. Suharto's election by the 1,000-member People's Consultative Assembly, over half of whom are appointed, was a foregone conclusion. Even his choice of Try Sutrisno as vice-president had been pre-ordained. Since rising to power in 1965 when he led the army to crush a coup attempt, Mr. Suharto has stood unopposed in all six elections in the giant South East Asian country of 180 million people. "Since there was only one presidential candidate, according to the law he is automatically formalised as president," chairman of the assembly, Wahono, said. The assembly accepted the choice by acclamation.

Gunmen hold 19 hostages in Costa Rica

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP) — Three gunmen were holed up Wednesday with 19 hostages, including the Nicaraguan ambassador, after vowing to leave "victorious or dead." "They have gallons of gasoline there, and if someone smokes or there is a gunshot, this could end tragically," mediator Cardinal Kigel Obando Y. Bravo of Nicaragua said. The gunmen, who stormed the embassy Monday with AK-47 assault rifles and other arms, are demanding the dismissal of Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo, President Violeta Chamorro's closest advisor. They also want the dismissal of Nicaraguan army chief Humberto Ortega, \$5 million for social projects in Nicaragua and \$1 million to finance their own movement. Interior Minister Alfredo Mendizola rejected the demands after he and other Nicaraguan officials arrived late Tuesday.

France's Joxe leaves ministry early

PARIS (R) — French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe left office to move to a more stable job Wednesday, less than two weeks before parliamentary elections expected to deal his Socialist Party a crushing defeat. "M. Pierre Joxe's office has come to an end and he has been called to other functions," the official Gazette announced. "The prime minister, M. Pierre Berenguer, is named defence minister." Political sources expected Mr. Joxe to be named president of the Public Audit Office at a cabinet meeting, a secure job from which he cannot be removed until he reaches the statutory retirement age of 69. He is only 58 now. Opposition leaders wasted no time in denouncing what they saw as a piece of shameless job-snatching by an outgoing government that had lost its public legitimacy.

Scots scoff at Major's plans

EDINBURGH (R) — The British government has unveiled plans to give Scotland greater control over its own affairs, but the measures were swiftly condemned by Scots themselves. "Chickenfeed," said a young Edinburgh voter. "What we need is our own Scottish assembly." Nationalists seeking an end to nearly three centuries of government from London called the package "the biggest damp squib since Guy Fawkes" — a reference to the leader of an unsuccessful plot to blow up the Westminster parliament in 1605. Draft legislation unveiled in the House of Commons will change the way Scottish affairs are handled by parliament, give more powers to the government department responsible for Scotland and increase the number of civil servants actually working in the area. It contains no concrete moves to devolve a political power to the land of five million people.

Theodorakis resigns parliamentary seat

ATHENS (R) — Mikis Theodorakis, who composed the score for the film Zorba the Greek, has resigned his seat in the Greek parliament, his office said Wednesday. Mr. Theodorakis, 67, turned in his resignation Tuesday night to concentrate on his new duties as a music director for the state-run Hellenic Radio and Television (ERT), his office said. He will be replaced by another conservative deputy, leaving the ruling New Democracy Party with a 152-seat absolute majority in the 300-member parliament. Mr. Theodorakis was a committed Communist for most of his life and served as a Communist deputy from 1981 to 1986. But he broke with the left and won a conservative seat in June 1989. He served briefly as minister without portfolio after the conservatives formed their first government in almost 10 years following fresh elections in April 1990.

Kanamaru probe widens in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Japanese prosecutors raided Okasan Securities brokerage in Tokyo in search of evidence of alleged huge tax evasion by fallen ruling party chief Shin Kanamaru, news reports said Wednesday. A spokesman for Okasan, said he could not confirm reports that prosecutors searched company premises Tuesday night looking for evidence linked to their probe of Mr. Kanamaru, who is under arrest. Television and news agency reports said, however, that investigators were looking for records of the sale to Mr. Kanamaru of one billion yen (\$8.6 million) worth of five-year discount bearer bonds.

French opposition 'to win' slimmer majority

PARIS (R) — France's centre-right opposition would clinch a comfortable but slimmer than earlier forecast majority at the March 21-26 general elections, according to an opinion poll released Wednesday.

The Sofres survey projected that out of 555 constituencies in mainland France, the Neo-Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) and its centre-right ally, the Union for French Democracy (UDF), would win 418 seats.

The two parties, which have 259 deputies in the outgoing National Assembly (lower house), are running single candidates in most constituencies.

A score of 418 seats would be well above the absolute majority of 278 but down from a projection of 453 in Sofres survey conducted on Feb. 6-10.

The new poll, published in Le Figaro newspaper and conducted on March 5-6, predicted 212 seats for the RPR and 201 for the UDF.

North Korea warns war possible at any time

PEKING (R) — North Korea, which has declared a state of "semi-war", warned Wednesday that all-out war could erupt any time on the tense Korean peninsula as U.S. and South Korean troops conduct annual manoeuvres.

Pyeongyang would not attack first, North Korean ambassador to China Chu Chang Jun told a news conference in Peking.

Kim Jong-Il, son of supreme leader Kim Il-Sung ordered the nation put on high alert because of the level of sophisticated weaponry the United States has brought to the annual Team Spirit military exercises, Mr. Chu said.

"The U.S. forces in Team Spirit '93 are using the most up-to-date weapons...not used in exercises before," Mr. Chu said. "An all-out war can break out any moment."

Mr. Kim Jong-Il, Pyongyang's military supreme, ordered the state of alert Monday. More than 100,000 North Koreans rallied in Pyongyang to support the order, North Korean media reported.

Mr. Chu was vague on why Pyongyang, for the first time since 1983, declared the semi-war footing. The joint exercise has been held every year since 1976, except for last year's which was cancelled due to a slight thaw in relations between North and South.

Washington and Seoul say the exercise is purely defensive.

Team Spirit draws outraged rhetoric from Pyongyang every year but this year a new factor exists — North Korea's refusal to admit international Atomic energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to check military facilities where nuclear weapons may be under



U.S. and South Korean Marines rehearse an amphibious landing at a beach on South Korea's southeast coast, during their yearly joint military exercises codenamed Team Spirit

development. On Feb. 25, the Vienna-based nuclear watchdog gave the North and month to respond to its demand for access to the sites at Yongbyon, 100 kilometres north-west of Pyongyang.

Pyeongyang has said that repeated demands from the IAEA could trigger war. Such demands violated North Korea's sovereignty, it said.

"If we open two military facilities today, they'll ask us to open eight tomorrow," Ambassador Chu said. "Then they'll tell us to open all our military facilities to inspection."

North Korea denies that it is secretly developing nuclear weapons and that the installations

at Yongbyon are conventional military sites.

North Korea's Ambassador to the United Nations Pak Gil Yon, seeking to explain to journalists why his country went on a "semi-war" footing, said the two Koreas had already signed a non-aggression pact and other agreements pledging not to attack each other.

"So then why did the Americans instigate the South Koreans to start such a manoeuvre?" he asked. "It is a war exercise and particularly a nuclear war exercise against the Northern part of the Korean peninsula."

"I think the situation is more serious than before," he told Reuters. "Any moment this milit-

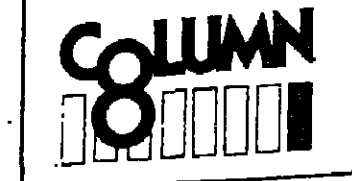
ary manoeuvre could be extended into a real war. I do not exclude this possibility."

He said the entire country and army was now on alert and in a state of "semi-war" to counter "such reckless aggression."

Washington and Seoul say the annual Team Spirit military exercises are a purely defensive action.

"But Mr. Pak linked the exercises to pressure on North Korea from the IAEA the United States and Japan for North Korea to allow inspections of its nuclear facilities."

"This is correlated with unreasonable pressures from IAEA. We will not accept this," he said.



Michael Jackson appears on crutches

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Pop superstar Michael Jackson, suffering an ankle injury, appeared onstage sitting in a wheelchair and then aided by crutches at the televised Soul Train Music Awards show Tuesday night. Jackson hurt his ankle Monday while rehearsing for the show, said Soul Train publicist Ramon Harvey. Jackson appeared towards the end of the syndicated broadcast to perform his hit song Remember The Time. Throughout the performance he was sitting in a wheelchair, as other performers danced around him. At the song's conclusion he stood briefly to take a bow as the audience responded with a standing ovation. Jackson was then wheeled off the stage to the awards podium, where he stood with the aid of the crutch. Jackson was hospitalised in January 1984 after his hair caught fire during filming of a Pepsi Cola commercial in Los Angeles. The accident, caused by a misfiring flash bomb, left him with second-degree scalp burns. Once known for being reclusive, Jackson has suddenly shown a high profile in recent weeks, appearing at President Bill Clinton's inaugural celebration, the NAACP Image Awards, the American Music Awards, the Grammy Awards and the Super Bowl's halftime show.

Stolen money — the soot of all evil

PANAMA CITY (R) — Three bandits saw their plans for easy money go up in smoke when they inadvertently burned almost 10,000 in cash while trying to open a service station safe with a blowtorch, police said Tuesday. The men, armed with pistols and wearing nylon stockings over their faces, tied up attendants at a Panama City petrol station early Monday and went to work on the safe, police said. "They spent more than 30 minutes trying to open it with a blowtorch. The safe got very hot and the bills burned. It was an absurd robbery," the police spokesman said.

Prince's sunshine tour slammed by press

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth's husband Prince Philip left Britain for a controversial yacht tour of the Caribbean that has been criticised as a squandering of taxpayers' money. The prince, 71, flew to Dominica on one of the queen's private jets. He will board the royal yacht Britannia for a 10-day tour to the West Indies. Montserrat and the Virgin Islands is what Buckingham Palace describes as "official working visits." But British tabloids, abuzz for months with critical stories about the royals, have said the trip looks suspiciously like a sunshine break for the prince.

Fergie's father steps down from polo job

LONDON (R) — The father-in-law of Britain's Prince Andrew resigned Tuesday from his job at a leading polo club following allegations over his private life. Major Ronald Ferguson, whose daughter Sarah "Fergie" Ferguson has separated from Prince Andrew, said he was stepping down from his post at the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club. Maj. Ferguson was honorary polo manager for Prince Charles until last week when Prince Charles said he would no longer be playing at the top level and would not require his services. The move was seen as a bid by the royals to distance themselves from Maj. Ferguson, who is alleged to have had an affair with a woman polo friend.

Ukrainian city to give fare dodgers the chop

KIEV (R) — A city in western Ukraine has hired karate enthusiasts to help collect bus fares from recalcitrant passengers, Ukrainian News Agency said Tuesday. Authorities in Chernivtsy near the Romanian border turned to the martial arts practitioners, all volunteers, after repeated attacks on bus inspectors, many of whom are young women. "It is an indisputable fact that order on public transport has improved," the agency said. Fares in the city stand at five karbovanets, Ukraine's interim currency, compared to the minimum monthly salary of 4,600. Passengers caught without a ticket are liable to a fine of 30 karbovanets.